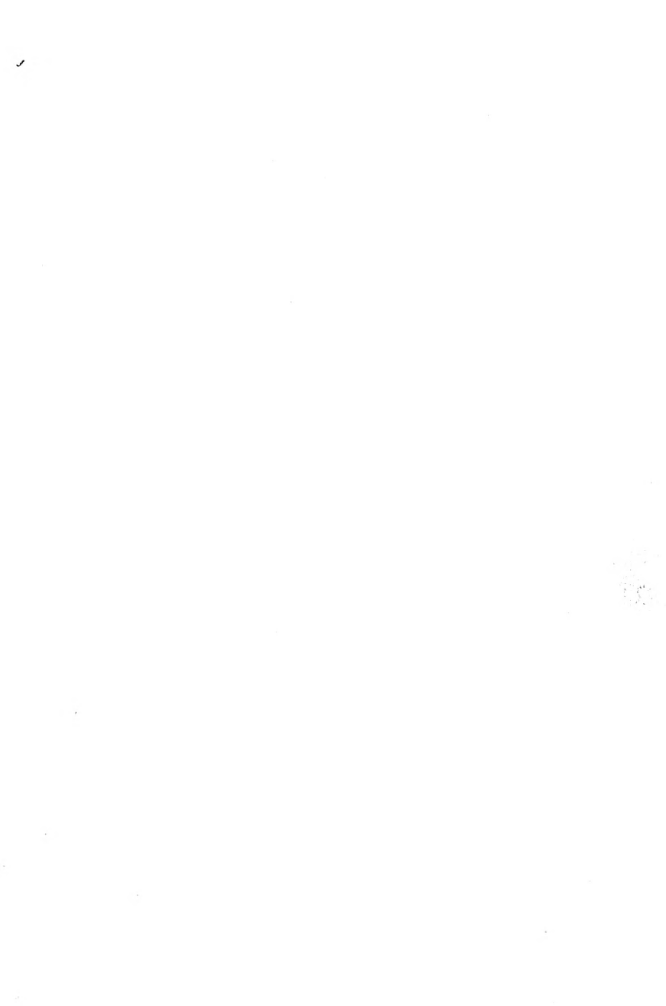


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THE

ITINERANT;

OR,

MEMOIRS OF AN ACTOR.

PART II.

VOL. III.

BY S. W. RYLEY.

“The world’s a stage,
“And all the men and women merely players;
“They have their exits and their entrances;
“And one man, in his time, plays many parts.”

SHAKESPEARE.

PHILADELPHIA:

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THE ITINERANT.

CHAP. XXI.

“FOLLY AS IT FLIES.”

HAVING finished Sullivan's interesting narrative, we began to moralise on its contents. “Alas!” observed Ann, “what a series of complicated misfortunes have this amiable couple experienced. It seems as if virtue and genius were peculiar objects of persecution and distress.”

“’Tis too often the case,” replied I, “view the proud merchant or manufacturer strutting upon ’Change, inflated with self approved confidence, arising—not from virtuous pursuits—not from genius—but from floating capital, and precarious confidence. I mean not to infer that the dealers in trade and barter—the merchant, the mechanic, and the manufacturer, are not many of them highly estimable members of society; I should be ungrateful and unjust not to allow it; I only conceive—and by long experience I am warranted in the observation—that modern trade, instead of being a fair exchange of useful articles for mutual benefit, is become a regular system of gambling; a trap-setting, forestalling, advantage-taking scheme.

Suppose a tradesman in distress. Let the capitalist hear of it, and according to every precept moral or religious, the unsophisticated mind would be led to suppose he would eagerly seize the opportunity to disburse a part of his riches for the service of his less fortunate acquaintance. But no. Such have not been the habits by which he acquired his wealth. We are the children of habit, like a mill horse he moves in the circle to which he has been accustomed; and instead of flying to rescue his neighbour, he enquires for the bill of sale, or employs a confidential friend to purchase the poor man's property at half its value. "Good heaven!" exclaimed Ann, "are these your opinions of trade?" "Not of *trade*; but of the majority of *traders*; who too frequently possess not a propensity that can distinguish them from the beast of the field, except that they are more stupid, and less useful."

Our reflections were interrupted by a loud exclamation from the adjoining room, followed by "D--n thy thick head, take that;" and a noise followed resembling the falling of something heavy. This I naturally conjectured arose from some dispute between the Lancashire Magistrate and his confidant Timothy; and proceeding to the scene of action, I observed the Justice, with his infirm leg bare, brandishing the fire poker--the stool it seems had been despatched at Tim's head previous to my entrance.

"My dear Sir, what is the matter?" enquired I.

"The matter, Sir!" replied the old gentleman, laying down the poker, "That d--nd Laneashire hog--that spreader of plaisters for the Whitworth butchers, has tortured me almost to death; my leg was bad enough before, but now-----" then writhing with pain he turned in his chair, and looking vengeance at Tim, proceeded "Get home, thou blundering, impudent, son of a b----; get home I say, to thy *browis* and bocking-weaving.

The servant, grown valiant by the entrance of a third person, ventured to peep from the screen, behind which he had sheltered, and with an arch leer replied, "When I go back to my bocking-weaving, I reckon, Mester, yone return to your cotton-spinning," then turning to me, he whispered, "'That's a tooth-drawer."

As the Magistrate originally commenced business in that capacity, it was natural to conclude this would not prove the "retort courteous." But I was mistaken. He was not ashamed of his origin, and merely said—rather smiling approbation than otherwise—"There's an impudent rascal for you, Mr. Romney. After rubbing my shin with Cayenne pepper, and throwing me into infernal tortures, the fellow has the impudence to call me a cotton spinner." "Mester," replied this forward clown, "yore mista'en—tak my word for it, yore mista'en. It's nother pepper, nor nowt o'th sort. It's what th' Whitworth Doctors caw *keen*, and Doctor John *allus* uses it to tak away proud flesh, so I'd advise you to recommend it to owd *Colleery Morbus*." "Confound you, and the Whitworth Doctors too. Go and get me a warm poultice directly you rascal."

When the servant retired, I observed some grains of Cayenne pepper on the table, which he had doubtless taken from the sideboard, supposing it red precipitate, called by the Whitworth Doctors, *keen*, and applied to his master's leg, much lacerated by tumbling over a wheelbarrow in the dark. On examining the limb, I with difficulty concealed the unfavourable impression it made upon me. Swollen till the skin appeared ready to burst, and irritated by Tim's ill-applied stiptic, it gave every indication of danger seriously alarming, and I recommended immediate application to a surgeon. This he at length consented to, provided the poultice failed in its effects. He had borne the pro-

longed absence of his servant with more patience than I expected, when he bounced into the room triumphantly exclaiming "I've fund it mester; I've fund it; potecary at next dur sells it." "What? you great oaf," said his master covering his leg, which Tim was unceremoniously preparing to rub with the contents of a small bottle, "what have you found?"

"Zackery bottle, mon, Zackery bottle. Here's th' subscription."

The old gentleman seemed almost as much delighted as his servant, and welcomed the small square phial as an old friend from whom he expected benefit. Nor was he deceived. The inflammation diminished perceptibly—the scarcely to be endured pain excited by the pepper gradually vanished—and when his leg was bound up, he launched out into encomiums upon the virtue of the medicine, that roused me to a more particular enquiry.

"The name given to this valuable stiptic is foreign I presume," observed I.

"No sir, no," replied the Justice. "The real name is Hadfield's Tincture; but the present maker and sole proprietor is Mr. Thomas Thackeray, of Mount Pleasant, near Ashton-under-line, a neighbour of mine, as I may say. It is generally known about us by the name of Thackeray's bottle; and this the country people have corrupted into Zackery bottle."*

The day was now fixed for our departure; and as *Speckington*, where I had agreed to join mana-

* The author of this work can, from experience, safely recommend Hadfield's Tincture, prepared by Mr. Thomas Thackeray, of Mount Pleasant, Ashton-under-line, Lancashire; and sold by most of the respectable medicine venders in the kingdom, as unequalled in a variety of disorders; viz. gravel, or general complaints in the kidneys, stopping a hæmorrhage, burns, scalds, sore eyes, scald head, &c. &c. &c. and as a stiptic it stands unrivalled.

ger Egerton, lay not more than twenty miles out of the direct London road, Mr. Robinson proposed to quit Plymouth at the same time, provided he might be allowed to pay half the expense of a chaise, on which condition he would see us safe to our journey's end.

This was quickly arranged, but the most unpleasant part of the business still remained ; namely, taking leave of the worthy North Briton. His kind and gentlemanly conduct had won our esteem, and we were debating whether a written farewell would not answer every purpose, without exposing us to the pain of a verbal one ; when our friend entered the room, and seeing a gloom upon each countenance, enquired if any accident had happened.

"No accident has happened," replied the Justice, "but an unpleasant scene is going to take place, and you are the cause."

Ponteus looked surprise.

"Yes," continued I, "you are the innocent cause of our present uneasiness. Had you been less friendly, kind and intelligent, we should feel less pain in saying farewell. To-morrow we leave Plymouth, and as this may be a final separation, wonder not that it is a grievous one."

"My guid friends," replied the honest Scot, "wherever yere fate may carry ye, my friendship and best wishes will gang along. Our intinacy has been short, but I shall reflect upon it with pleasure ; and if destiny should bring you ance more across the Tweed, doubt not of a hearty welcome frae Pious Ponteus. Magistrate, yere hand. I shall be in Lancashire almost as soon as yersel, and will na fail to pay ye a visit."

Vain were Ann's attempts to introduce a less painful topic ; the magistrate's nerves being of the relaxed kind, were not easily screwed up ; but a large tumbler of brandy and water did the busi-

ness, after which he smacked his lips, and exclaimed "There, now I am a match for the blue d—ls."

I know not whether I have made the observation before, for it is difficult to avoid a repetition of ideas in nearly two thousand pages; but I meet with so many checks to the system of Lavater, that is, of judging by physiognomy on first appearances, that I have nearly given it up, as a dangerous philosophy.

The good old magistrate, for whom we now entertained a warm affection, on the outset of our acquaintance made an unfavourable impression on my mind. He appeared to me, a sordid, cotton-headed, cotton-hearted, Manchester-market man; possessing not an idea beyond his business, nor a feeling that human nature has cause to be proud of. I now found to my shame, and the downfall of my system, that he had a heart replete with goodness—in a rough case indeed; but whenever a glimpse of it appeared, it shone like the sun from behind a cloud.

At ten o'clock the following morning the chaise was at the door, and Tim had bestowed the packages as well as he could. It required some ingenuity, indeed, for Mr. Robinson's luggage, added to ours, with the addition of Tim's trappings, crammed into an old pair of saddle-bags, and a box, containing two dozen bottles of Hadfield's Tincture, which the justice swore he would never again travel without, reminded me of my first journey with Mrs. Betty and the green bag. With all Timothy's contrivance, we found it impossible to accommodate the blunderbuss, nor would his master be incommoded with the saddle-bags; so the latter were thrown over the rail in front, and the brazen implement of defiance rested upon the servant's arm, forming, with his squab figure, a ludicrous and rather formidable appearance.

Being seated, the hostler was about to close the door, when our Scotch friend arrived. Each held out his hand, which cordially shaking, he added, whilst a glistening tear stood in his eye, "May the Holy of Holies tak ye into his special keeping! and may the best days ye ever kenned be the worst ye ha' to come!"

Ann wiped her eyes—I squeezed his honest hand—Tim shouldered his blunderbuss—the old justice chuckled in his throat, and roared out, "Drive on, and be d——d to you; drive on."

As I strolled into the bar of the inn, at the conclusion of our second day's journey, a play bill attracted my attention. The performance advertised was Pizarro, with the farce of the Wedding Day: Rolla and Sir Adam Contest, in large characters, to be performed by a Mr. Swell. Naturally conceiving this gentleman, from the pomposity of his announcement, to be what is technically called a *star*, although his name was unknown to a London audience, I enquired respecting him of mine hostess. When, lo! this great feature in the *Brewsbury* drama, was neither more or less than the *Brewsbury* manager; who whenever he condescended to appear before a *Brewsbury* audience, thus distinguished himself; leaving his company to make their way by dint of talent, if they had any; whilst his own consequence was supported by this kind of ostentatious egotism.

This proud superiority was not calculated to prejudice me in Mr. Swell's favour; nevertheless, I felt curious to see the man who thus set modesty and humility at defiance. With this intent, I walked towards the theatre; and as I passed the stage-door, in my way to the pit entrance, I observed a lusty good-looking man, whose countenance was not strange, although it appeared as if many years had elapsed without a personal communication.

I stood and gazed—ran over my mental diction—

ary of faces—but could not recollect the owner. At length my fixed attention roused the object I was endeavouring to identify. His examination commenced with little less strictness than my own. He put on his spectacles—stroked his double chin, and this action conveyed instant information to my mind. The hand, armed with five fingers, instead of a thumb, brought conviction. “Bonny Long!” I exclaimed, holding out my hand; “honest Bonny, is that you?”

“Can it be my old manager?” said the veteran, looking earnestly in my face. “It is—it is Mr. Romney, by all my hopes; and how is the dear partner of all your joys and sorrows?”

“Well, Bonny; and she will be happy to see you at the George Inn, as soon as convenient.”

He informed me that the pleasure of paying his respects must per force be deferred till the evening’s performance was ended, for that he was a kind of sub-manager; and added a wish to introduce me to Mr. Swell.

As we were going down the lobby, leading to the stage, Bonny stopped short, and holding up his fist in a jocular manner, said, “Ah, Mr. Romney, how could you turn your old friend into ridicule? You certainly stepped a little beyond the truth, about the red spencers. Yet, notwithstanding the laugh went against me, I read the Itinerant with pleasure, and thank you for speaking so well of me.—Oh, here’s the manager,” continued he, taking off his hat, and introducing me to a figure, tall and thin as myself, in the true Peruvian costume.

His address was gentlemanly, though formal; and, as far as his false complexion would allow me to judge, he possessed pleasing features. He received me with a distance and dignity that I attributed, in some degree, to the character he was going to perform—a part of which he was repeating

to himself when I entered—and the stiff stateliness of his gait and manner confirmed me in this opinion. His acting—for I stood at the wing during a scene or two—bore testimony of stage knowledge; but the unpliability of his muscles—the total want of expression so visible in his countenance, ill portrayed the animated, sanguine, patriotic Rolla.

I was next introduced into the men's dressing-room : the theatre did not boast a green-room : and as I sat on a chest of clothes, conversing with the sub-manager, a person vociferated, as he entered the apartment—"Time enough—I am sure the second act cannot be over yet.—Been in the fields, ruralising and shepherdising amongst the cows and sheep. That's the way to carry on the war, on a fine evening like this."

The light not being very splendid I remained some time unobserved, and Mr. Gloster—whom I hope my reader remembers at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross—continued his conversation with the dresser. "Aye—any thing will do—any dress is good enough for a jail keeping thief. Our stiff rumped manager is monotonising in Rolla, whilst I—Gloster—am obliged to sentimentalise in the centinel. Shant vagabonise here long—that's one comfort. Pack up the saddle bags at the *end of the town*—a short stick and D. I. O.—Fraternise with Mother Baker, and carry on the war at Canterbury."

Then casting his eye towards the place where Mr. Long and I sat, he continued in a low voice, "Who's that? A new feature, I suppose—a star—a blazing star—announced in capitals—knock the manager from the top of the bill, eh?"

As I thought it would appear unfriendly to remain longer silent, I went towards him, and holding out my hand, said, "Mr. Gloster, how do you do?"

"Ah! Mr. Romney; by the blood of the Mirabels I am glad to find you'll recognise an old friend,

an honest man, and let me tell you, though the natives here can't find it out, a good actor. Sir, you are welcome to Denmark,—we'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart—egad it must be water if we do. Nothing to be got here but pure element and the roots of the earth. Botanise, sir, botanise—we are all botanisers—that's the way we carry on the war. Nebuchadnezzar was a voluptuary compared to our company of comedians."

"What then, is your's a sharing company, Mr. Gloster?"

"Oh! no, sir; we salarise; but it is so small spun, sir, such a mere egg broth business, that a man can't carry on the war without his guts grumbling."

As the introduction of Messrs. Long and Gloster would amuse the magistrate, besides giving pleasure to my wife, I invited them to sup with me, when the performance was ended.

"You may safely advertise us as principal actors in that play," said Gloster. "Depend upon it, we shall be perfect in our parts, and carry on the war with true dramatic ardour."

When I returned, Tim informed me he had just put his master to bed. "I think i'my heart, sur," said he, "th' owd gentleman has had more ale nor mustard to-neet; for as I helped him up stairs, he kept jowing me oth' yead and singing 'Oh rare Arthur O'Bradley.'"

Our theatrical friends were true to their appointment, and Ann sincerely rejoiced at once more meeting the smiling, good natured Bonny Long; whilst the eccentricities of Gloster, for he had improved his vocabulary of cant phrases, were highly amusing. "Well, sir," said he, when the waiter had retired, "what think you of our *Swell*? You scrutinised a scene or two I understand."

"The man's a decent actor," I replied, "but rather mistakes the part, I think, by throwing too

much hauteur and stateliness into it. 'This ill becomes the noble minded, unambitious Rolla.'

"Mistakes the part!" replied Gloster. "Pardon me—there is no mistake in the case. He can't act otherwise; he is the same character morning, noon, and night. Stiff as a poker; carries on the war in grand perpendicular style; Puffendorff the first. Acts with us at night; does not know us in the morning. Struts and sails about in glazed boots at the rate of a mile in two hours. He is the Great Mogul in the Green Room; an eastern monarch on his sofa; and on the road the grand bang up. Flashes fifty capes: Jehu, the son of Nimshi, was a fool to him.——"

"As my shoulders can witness," added Bonny. "In one of our expeditious movements, for you must know, Mr. Romney, we are called the flying company, he upset us all into a ditch. I put my shoulder out, and Mrs. Fusby broke her arm; yet he moved not a muscle."

"How should he? They are fixed as fate," interrupted Gloster.

"Very true," continued the former. "When he had recovered his feet, and the coach was righted, he condescended to say 'It's well it's no worse;' then remounted, blasted the off-leader, and cursed the wheel horse for a beggar."

Knowing from long experience that managers are seldom spoken too well of by their performers, I changed the subject to the more immediate concerns of my companions, and the remainder of the evening passed off with innocent pleasantries.

Soon after daylight in the morning, I was awakened by a loud knock at my chamber door, and was soon informed by Timothy that his master was suddenly taken ill, and requested to see me. Without loss of time I obeyed the summons, and found the old gentleman writhing with torture from the cholic. Having despatched the servant for medi-

cal assistance, he addressed me, as well as the short intervals from pain would permit, in the following words: "Mr. Romney, you appear an honest man, and as such I place confidence in you. I have four children, two sons and two daughters. In that trunk is my will. If I should die, and truly I am very ill, I request you to act as my friend, by conveying it to my executors. I have divided my property equally amongst my children, for I hold it my duty to make no distinction; and if the example were more generally followed, it would be attended with the most beneficial consequences."

I faithfully promised my services, happy to find the magistrate so much of my own opinion respecting the cruel and oppressive law of primogeniture.

The surgeon having received intimation of his patient's ailment, quickly relieved the pain, but strongly recommended rest for a day or two; under the plea that a relapse would produce dangerous consequences. This delay, I was ill disposed to submit to. On the score of prudence it was injurious; besides the anxiety always attached to the progress of a journey, naturally renders any delay irksome and unpleasant; and I was meditating how to prepare Mr. Robinson's mind for a separation, when Ann mentioned the probability of a temporary arrangement with Mr. Swell. The theatre, we understood, was poorly attended; and as any emolument to myself would depend upon the receipts, my engagement for a couple of nights would be all in favour of the manager.

Accordingly, I knocked at his door, and was ushered into a respectable apartment; where, lounging on a sofa, in his robe de chambré, I made my bow to Mr. Swell, and his pretty looking wife. At my entrance, he condescended to move his head, and pointed to a chair; but he was too much engaged with a turf acquaintance and a racing calendar, to bestow speech upon me. His friend, as

well as himself, appeared deeply versed in the mysteries of the jockey club—at least, so I judged from the technicals they dealt in—and had their existence been at stake, they could not have been more apparently anxious about the winning horses at York and Newmarket. At length, after settling matters seemingly to their satisfaction, the stranger rose to depart; but judging, I suppose, from Mr. Swell's manner, that I was a nobody, he acted accordingly, and left the room without noticing me.

We were no sooner alone, than I introduced my wishes to the manager, and requested his opinion.

“Really sir, I know not what to say upon the subject,” replied he, yawning, and picking his teeth, “the people of fashion here are so fond of cards, and trade so flat, that no encouragement is given to the theatre. I have played three of my best parts to empty benches; and after such a flagrant want of taste, I do not see what you, a stranger, can expect.”

At that moment, his knowing friend re-entered the room in great glee, exclaiming, “Highflyer has won at York, and Hit-or-miss at Doncaster.”

“Have they, by George?” said the manager, with more vivacity than I thought him capable of, “Then I *sack* twenty guineas.”

I was so completely disgusted with this lounging, pompous being, that I rose, made my bow to the lady, and walked leisurely out of the room.”

On my return, I found Gloster and Long seated with my wife. “Well, sir,” said the former, “how have you carried on the war? What says the nabob? Does he fraternise? Shall we have you for a few nights?”

After I had repeated the manager's vain—and to me, decisive—speech, he continued—“Just as I said. He only wants half a dozen black slaves, to fan him, and he would be a Great Mogul. Have you seen him in the street, Mr. Romney?”

Answering in the negative—"Then you've a pleasure to come," added he, "The sultan of Seringapatam—broad-cloth—doe-skin—and bang-up boots. Hat cocked up behind—head, neck, and body all of a piece—move together in a poker-like position. Never smiles—knows every thing—choked with judgment and importance. I'm sick on't—a short stick for my money. I'll not stay here to brutalise much longer. In short, I'll carry on the war amongst human creatures, or not at all."

CHAP. XXII.

“THE MAN OF THE WORLD.”

MACKLIN.

MR. Robinson was so perfectly recovered on the following day, that he anticipated my wishes, by a proposed removal. “The doctor,” he added, “wants to make a job of it, but I’ll disappoint him. Tim ! bring me a glass of Hadfield’s Tincture, that always settles my business.”

Ere I left *Brewsbury*, I gave Gloster a letter of introduction to my friend, manager Egerton ; being determined, as he said, to use his short stick the very first opportunity. Long, who likewise came to see us off, regretted the failure of my application to Mr. Swell ; but modestly begged leave to ask if I had not shewn a little of that pride, Mr. Gloster so justly condemned in his employer. “I should not at all wonder,” he observed, “if the manager wished to engage you for a night or two, because the terms are so obviously in his favour ; and had you prudently overlooked that vanity which, to a stranger, is certainly repulsive, you might have come to terms ; on the contrary, you left his presence, with the air of an ill-used benefactor, rather than a suppliant.”

“Suppliant, Mr. Long, is a term I by no means approve, and in the present instance, I think it misapplied. I left the room, I hope, with the air

of a man who thought himself rudely treated, and had spirit enough to shew it."

"Well, well," said Bonny, "every man acts according to his own feelings; but I am sorry you leave *Brewsbury* with such an unfavourable impression of Mr. Swell, because he has many good points about him, although my friend Gloster cannot find them out."

"Which be they?" said Gloster.

"In the first place, he is an honest man, and is as liberal as managers generally are."

"That is," replied Gloster, "he carries on the war prudently, and knows that honesty is the best policy."

"In the second place, he is an excellent husband, and a good father."

"I believe he does neither brutalise, nor tyrannise in his domestic arrangements;" replied Gloster, "and I wish, for his own sake, he would harmonise a little more with his performers."

"Lastly," said Bonny, "he is a good actor."

"In comedy," interrupted Gloster, "but when he carries on the war in buskins, he reminds me of an enraged turkey cock in a farm yard; sidling to and fro, and silencing the geese with gobble, gobble, gobble!"

We stopped so long at the different stages, and made such short days in compliance with the whims and wishes of our travelling companion—that several elapsed ere we were set down at Speckington. I immediately informed Egerton of our arrival, and a few minutes brought him to the inn, where he made himself so agreeable by good humour and unaffected manners, that the magistrate requested he would be his guest at supper.

After our repast I expected my new manager would have entered upon business. But no. He had mounted a new hobby, and the common concerns of life were not to be put in competition.

This consisted in feats of dexterity with tea spoons, tobacco-pipes, wine glasses, &c.; to these he added trials of strength—such as bending the tongs, and twisting the poker round his arm, as specimens of the Gymnasia. In fact, he displayed great ingenuity and vigour, and so delighted Mr. Robinson that he got intoxicated in drinking to their better acquaintance.

The following morning, after seeing the worthy Justice snugly seated in the London mail, I posted to the theatre, and having settled the business of our first appearance, was introduced into the green room. The company were all strange, except a Mrs. Clutterbuck, and she had formerly made one of my dramatis personæ, at Liverpool. She was Egerton's tragedy queen, and if report might be credited, stood *high* in his *favour*, from a similar propensity to *experiments* and *improvements*, particularly in the *art of love*. As we were conversing upon old times, a well-known voice exclaimed, "My dear fellow, that's not the way to carry on the war," and behold, Gloster entered! He took his short stick, he said, and left the grand bashaw the day I quitted *Brewsbury*. "I like manager Egerton;" he added, "he carries on the war in a liberal gentlemanly style. No buckram—does not ride the high horse—nor walk over the actors, and swell upon the rialto—as who should say, I am every thing, and you are nobody.. He is fond of patentising and reformising to be sure, but there's no harm in that—every man rides his hobby, and mine at present is loyalisin. Would you believe it? I have not yet been four and twenty hours in Speckington, and my benefit is made already;"

"As how?"

"Why sir, my first business in a strange town is to enquire into the general political principles of the people. In this place, besides the body corpo-

rate, the inhabitants consist chiefly of parsons, captains on half pay, a superannuated admiral or two, officers of the customs, and such like—all staunch men and true, or how could they carry on the war? Well, sir—last night, being my first appearance, I prevailed upon the manager to advertise me for God save the King, which I sung with all the feeling and pathos in my power. It was well received, but not according to my expectation encored; upon which I stepped forward, and thus addressed the audience, “Ladies and gentlemen, excuse the effervescence of a loyal and grateful heart, and pardon me if I take the liberty of repeating the good old song. This was received with acclamations—my love and attachment to ministers, placemen, and pensioners taken for granted—and a bumper secured for my *ben*. Nothing like loyalising for a benefit.”

My terms with the manager were, to play three weeks, for which I was to take half the house at my benefit. Indeed, the kindness of Egerton would have acceded to almost any terms I could have proposed, but I was not mercenary enough to take advantage of the best of hearts, and the noblest of dispositions.

Our acting in “A Cure for the Heart-Ache,” and “The Lying Valet,” seemed to please, if we might judge by the applause; but that was no criterion on which I could build for pecuniary success, as Gloster said, not having the precaution to *loyalise* as he had done. The next play was Hamlet, in which I personated Polonius, and the manager the melancholy, wo-begone Prince of Denmark. The prompter of this company was as eccentric as his employer; but not possessing the same good sense and talent, he frequently became the object of mirth. He was fond of new readings, particularly his own; and in almost every play would have rendered the actors ridiculous, had

they been weak enough to follow his advice. For instance, when Hamlet says, "Give every man his deserts, and who shall 'scape whipping;" he wanted him to follow it up practically—that is—shew by the motion of the right hand the act of flagellation. Again—when Hamlet asks, "Is that Horatio?" and the latter replies, "A piece of him;" I was surprised to see the person who performed the part with only half his body visible to the audience; but I soon understood that this was another new reading of Mr. Pea-Whistle, the prompter. In Pizarro, Orozembo is asked, "Dost thou not tremble?" and he replies, "I never yet trembled before my God, and shall I before man?—Before *thee*, thou *less* than man." From this, Mr. Pea-Whistle inferred that the part should always be personated by a boy, otherwise the author's meaning is lost.

The manager performed Hamlet very respectably on the evening alluded to; but when the whole of his feelings should have been wrought up, to meet his mother in her closet, the princely Dane, regardless of time or place, was discovered in the scene-room, with a pair of boxing gloves, sparring with the Ghost; and Gloster who represented this august personage, received his praise for having some knowledge of the gymnasia.

The reward of my three weeks toil, the benefit, with all the novelty I could introduce, was unsuccessful, owing to a circumstance, simple enough in itself, but holding forth a true picture of the corruption of the times, and the difficulty, nay impossibility, in provincial towns—more especially where black and red coats are predominant—for an independent character to exist, if his livelihood hangs upon the favour of the public.

It happened that a dinner was to be eaten, to celebrate the anniversary of Lord Castlereagh's

birth day ; to which I received a written invitation, couched in the following terms

“ SIR,

“ I have the honour to be elected president of the sound and loyal society called the Castlereagh Club. A dinner is to be given in honour of that great and disinterested statesman, and I am requested to say, that you will be admitted gratis on this glorious occasion, provided you sing us a few songs. Mind—they must be *decent* till nine o'clock, and then a *blue* one or so, would not be amiss. ‘ God save the king,’ must be sung twice. The first time kneeling, the second, standing, with each man his right hand upon his left breast. We should wish you to introduce the following verse, written by the Receiver-general.

“ Britons, this happy day
Brought forth great Castlereagh;
Long may he live.
Pride of the treasury bench,
Scourge of the blasted French,
He will their pockets drench,
Long may he live!”

On the receipt of this vulgar, and, I thought, insulting epistle, I was fool enough to fly into a passion, and sat down to pen a serious reply ; but on a second reading, it appeared so ridiculous, that I laughed at my own folly, and determined to treat it with irony. Accordingly I despatched the following answer :

“ Mr. Romrey esteems himself highly honoured by the invitation of the loyal and truly patriotic president of the Castlereagh Club, and is sorry he cannot avail himself of it, more especially as it is couched in terms so *congenial* with the feelings of

an *independent* mind. The additional verse is *excellent*, and betrays the legitimate genius of the worthy collector of taxes. If, however, Mr. Romney might be permitted to hint that any improvement is possible, he thinks, by way of variety, it might be as well perhaps to exchange the word *their*, in the last line but one, for *our*. The erudite collector is particularly happy in the term *drench*.

“*To Peter Pension, Esq.*

“*President of the Castlereagh Club.*”

Ere I despatched my note, I shewed it to the manager and Gloster. Egerton smiled, and said I was right; but Gloster observed, “It’s fine talking in times like these. If you gormandise with these people, and signalise yourself by singing the Receiver-general’s nonsense, your *ben* will overflow. On the contrary, if you send that letter, the *mopusses* will fight shy, and you will have the starving comfort of honest independence to console you under the misery of empty pockets. It’s a trial of skill—Belly *versus* Starvation. One while, I patriotised; but I soon found I should be coffinised if I continued; so I have loyalised ever since. That’s the way to carry on the war.”

My rejecting the dinner invitation, and the sarcasm on the poetry, were quickly circulated through the loyal town of *Speckington*, and I was pointed at as a Jacobin—an enemy to my king and country; for it was impossible, in the eyes of these Gothamites, to be a friend to the constitution, unless you are an enemy to peace, and patronise prostitution and plunder.

There is something so disgusting, so sickening to common sense and common honesty, in the bloated boasting, and pretended loyalty of *placemen* and *pensioners*; their motives are so contemptibly barefaced and obvious, that a person so situated, pos-

sessing the smallest share of modesty, one would think should be silent at least on subjects of this kind; instead of which they proclaim their venality from the house tops, and browbeat the very people who are taxed to support them.

The night previous to my benefit, a dispute arose between Mr. Pea-Whistle, the prompter; Mr. Tweedle, the leader of the band; and Mr. Gloster, the comedian. The circumstance that gave rise to it was the mislaying of a song given by Pea-Whistle to Tweedle, and which Gloster was to have sung between the acts. It was a new song, written for the occasion, and of such a strong loyal tendency, that Gloster depended greatly upon it for the success of his benefit. "I'll nail 'em, my boy," said he to a bystander: "mind how I'll bring 'em down." But Tweedle was neither able to produce the song, nor was the tune familiar to him; so that when the bell rung for the symphony, he struck up God save the King. Poor Gloster stamped, and raved, and swore; but there was no retreating--go on he must, or lose his character: accordingly he advanced and made his bow--the audience rose and pulled off their hats--and looking vengeance at the fiddler, he began,

" God save great George our King;
Long live our noble King;
God save the King."

" Catgut-scraping scoundrel !" in a low voice.

" Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us;
God save the King."

"And d--n that fiddling puppy!" In short every verse was interlarded with abuse and execrations, heard plainly by the person who excited

them, but delivered in too low a key to annoy the audience. Being in a hurry to dress for Richmond, he smothered his further resentment till that important business was settled. He then fell foul of the prompter, and the enraged musician quickly joined them. "Where's my song?" exclaimed Gloster the moment he appeared.

"Speak like a gemman, sir," said Tweedle, "and I'll answer you."

"Gentlemen," interrupted Pea-Whistle, "you are both speaking off the book: be cool, and I'll give you the word of reconciliation."

"Don't interrupt me," said Gloster; "I'm not to be fiddleised out of my song."

"Fiddleised!" repeated the enraged knight of the string, advancing towards Gloster in a menacing attitude. Pea Whistle, fearful lest farther altercation might beget blows, retired to begin the act; and the exasperated tragedian was on the point of seizing the fiddler by the nose, when the call boy exclaimed, "Mr. Gloster, the stage waits." Away ran Gloster;—"Thus far into the bowels of the land have we marched without impediment," &c.—so the spirit of animosity was buried in the bowels of the land, and the play ended without further controversy.

When Gloster understood by my letter that I declined Mr. Pension's dinner invitation, he set his wits to work in order to be accepted in my stead. This, as he had gained the reputation of a staunch man by singing in the theatre, and talking in public bars, in fact, by setting himself off in every possible way—was without much difficulty accomplished; and the Receiver-general was so elated by the effect his poetry produced, and Gloster's manner of delivering it, that an exciseman's place shortly afterwards becoming vacant, it was offered to this time-serving actor, who very wisely accepted it.

Gloster and self-interest were never for a moment separated. He was a changeling, upon the principle that all mankind are in full chace after fortune or ambition, and that no efforts were mean, no projects unjust, so they came within the letter of the law, that tended to secure them. Under these impressions he acted ; but his private opinions may be gathered from his humorous description of the dinner party. "My dear sir," said he, "you lost a high treat yesterday ; that is, if you have any taste for the ridiculous. Such gormandising, and gluttonising, and loyalising, and brutalising ;—such toasts, and sentiments, and speeches ;—such roaring, and shouting, and clapping of hands ;—the uproarious mirth and bursts of nonsense still ring in my ears ;—and if my interest had not been materially concerned, I should have wished myself carrying on the war in some more peaceable quarter. Prudence, however, spurred me on, and I believe she has settled my pecuniary concerns in this town. Some talked of an overflowing *ben*, others hinted at a place in the excise ; and with such things in perspective, who, that had common sense, would not apostatise and opinionise with beings even more stupid and sottish than the members of the Castlereagh Club."

It will not be supposed that we parted with our worthy manager without regret. His many amiable propensities and good qualities rendered him dear to all who knew him. To me he was peculiarly so, owing to a similarity in our way of thinking. Even his oddities and extravagancies were pleasing, inasmuch as they were always innocent, frequently useful, and tended to injure nobody but himself.

After five weeks absence, we again entered the metropolis, and took up our residence at the old place. Indeed we felt ourselves so completely comfortable in the house of Mrs. Wakefield, that it

will be a sensible mortification, should we, upon any future occasion, visit London, and find her apartments engaged.

During our absence the Lyceum had undergone a complete alteration, and plays were now performing there by the burnt-out company of Drury Lane. A comedy by Mr. Lee, to whom I had been introduced by my friend Mathews, was advertised, called *Grieving's a Folly*; and from having heard the piece read, I was naturally anxious to see it acted. With this view I waited upon the manager, whom I had frequently met in the Green Room at Drury Lane Theatre, and requested orders for myself and Mrs. R——. The great man received me with all the freezing dignity, and ungentlemanly hauteur of office; and though he did not deny my request, he acceded to it in that kind of way that would have rendered obligation to such a being irksome. Accordingly I declined it, and for the first time during thirty years paid money to see a play.

Good frequently springs out of evil. Orders for the theatre are invariably given for the boxes; from an idea, I suppose, that the pit is the more likely to fill; therefore, had I found favour in the sight of this——manager, we should have been consigned to these regions; but being left to my own free will, I, fortunately, as it afterwards proved, chose the pit. Previous to the entertainment, we quitted the theatre, and going down the lobby, I observed three well dressed men in high altercation. As they did not observe us, I stopped to hear the conclusion, and could plainly distinguish that one of them by his pronunciation was a Frenchman, and that the dispute had arisen from a supposed insult offered by him to the two others. There was somewhat in the manner and conversation of my countrymen, that convinced me this was some scheme of plunder; and, observing them

very narrowly, I perceived the one who said least dive his hand into the foreigner's pocket, and draw out something which had the appearance of a book. Without a moment's deliberation I flew to the spot and seized his arm ; upon which he dropped the plunder, and as I stooped to pick it up, he dealt a blow that completely upset me.

Monsieur, though unconscious in whose cause I was acting, came to my assistance, meanwhile the depredators made their escape. By this time two or three gentlemen had joined us, to whom I related the attempted theft ; and when I turned round to look for my wife, I found her shaking hands with Roget, our friend and fellow-lodger at Brighton. This was indeed a delightful rencontre, and the pleasure I felt in restoring his pocket-book, which contained more property than a prudent man would have carried to a theatre, need not be dwelt upon. Roget accompanied us to Northumberland-street, and amused us with what he was pleased to call his adventures since our separation. These I shall confine to a few words, though the talkative Frenchman spun them out, by episode and digression, into an amusing narrative. He had prudence enough, it appeared, to lie *péruée* in London for a few weeks, when finding no enquiry made concerning him, either by advertisement or otherwise ; and accidentally stumbling upon a gentleman, who had in various instances befriended him at Brighton, and now undertook to recommend him to the few powerful families, who still remained in the metropolis—he once again emerged from obscurity, and was in full employment, both as an artist and a musician.

The following day we were agreeably surprised by a visit from St. Clair and his pretty wife ; and the surprise was mutual, for they were ignorant of our return, and merely called *en passant* to enquire after us. Ann, after the usual compliments, was

going to introduce Roget, when he interrupted her—"Madame Romney, I will save you de trouble of presenting me, to Monsieur St. Claire; ve meet before very often; he gain my goot opinion; and by gar, de first time I see his leetel wife, she make vater in my mouth."—A general smile followed this whimsical transposition of a sentence Roget had taken no small pains to learn; when he continued—"Vat you all smile for? Sans doute I make a de blunder sometime, but not dis time."

"I am sorry for it," said St. Clair, affecting to look grave; "for if you are correct, my wife must have been very indiscreet."

"Madame St. Clair can do noting wrong; and from your own vords I vill judge. Yesterday, in—val you call—*Coffin* Garden, you say, de pine apple and de melon make vater in your mouth."

"No, Roget; I said, they made my mouth water."

"En verité, dat is the same ting. Monsieur Romney—ladies—vat difference can dere be between make vater in my mouth, and make my mouth vater?"

Finding it would be a vain attempt to convince him of his error, and in the present company perhaps an improper one, I changed the subject; and anxious to know if a friend from Manchester still remained a prisoner in the King's Bench, I proposed a walk, and we soon found ourselves within the walls of this immense warehouse of human misery.

As we slowly paraded the court, I marvelled to observe what a diversity of mind was visible in each countenance. Some were playing at ball, with as much vivacity and apparent mirth and happiness, as though they were not in a state of bondage; whilst others, with arms folded, and eyes fixed upon the pavement, seemed lost in thought, until the shouts and boisterous mirth of their less

sensitive companions interrupted their reverie. We were nearly arrived at the extreme end of the court, and were observing upon the different effects produced by the same cause, when a melancholy being, whose tatters scarcely served the purpose of decency, approached. He carried a young child in one arm, whilst the other supported a female little better habited than himself, and five half-naked brats brought up the rear.

“Good heaven!” cried Ann, “what hard-hearted creditor—what human creature could plunge into misery this family of unfortunates? Oh, that some of our hundred thousand pounds friends from Manchester or Liverpool could see this, what pleasure they would take in relieving or lightening such a weight of wo!”

I could not help smiling at the simplicity of this remark. How readily a mind not poisoned by a trading intercourse with the world, judges the feelings of others by its own!

There was something dreadful in the man’s aspect. The expression was not simply grief, but settled despondence, and fixed despair.

The French teacher of concords and sweet sounds had a heart that accorded with his profession, and, when touched, produced heavenly music. This ragged family needed no interpreter to tell their tale. Roget fully comprehended the whole—and more—for he imagined the case worse than it really was, and the effect produced was a mixture of tragedy and comedy, that would have been highly amusing under other circumstances.

In broken English, attended with shrugs and grimaces, he gave all hard hearted creditors most devoutly to the d—l: then rummaging his pockets, which he had done once or twice before without effect, he exclaimed, “*Sacra Dieu!* vere is all my *l’argent?*” Then, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he hurried away, saying, “I am gone—but I come back.”

We were at a loss to guess the meaning of this quick movement; but as he promised to return, we made ourselves easy. Meanwhile we were not unfeeling spectators of this melancholy scene. A man with a wife and six children, nearly without raiment, or the common necessities of life, particularly as it was apparent from his manner that he had seen better days, was an object of no mean commiseration.

As Ann and Mrs. St. Clair were dividing some oranges amongst the children, I drew their unfortunate parent from the group, and introduced, with as much delicacy as I was able, the subject of his misfortunes. "Ah! sir," he replied with great emotion, "it is not for myself I feel the horrors of poverty and imprisonment. I could bear them as an individual, I hope, with Christian fortitude and resignation; but yonder group," pointing to his wife and children, "unman me. To see them destitute—to hear them plead for what I have not to bestow—creates a pang my own privations could never inflict."

Tears, which he vainly endeavoured to hide, here arrested his words; and as he turned from me, I could not help thinking the face had been at one time familiar to me, as it should seem, before care and famine had worn cavities in a countenance once the harbinger of health and prosperity. Questioning him respecting his place of residence, I found I was not mistaken. He was a native of a populous town in Lancashire, by trade a cotton manufacturer, "and," continued he, "for many years a prosperous one. But confiding too much in the probity and integrity of others, I at length became a bankrupt. Fifteen shillings in the pound was thought a fair composition, and all my creditors were satisfied, except one, who bore me an inveterate grudge from the following circumstance. I was one evening, during the disturbances in Lan-

cashire, standing at my door, when the local cavalry from a neighbouring town made their appearance. There had been some public dinner, and they were foaming with loyalty and liquor, flourishing their shining steel, and cutting six, as they call it, at almost every thing they met. Nay, so expert were they, that a poor dog, barking I suppose in a disloyal manner, had his leg severed from his body at one stroke. At a small adjoining public house several people were drinking, and a poor woman had with difficulty prevailed upon her husband to accompany her home. She had got him to the door as the cavalry passed, and being much intoxicated, he happened to reel against one of the equestrians, whose dignity was so much hurt, that he made several cuts at the man with his sword. These his wife endeavoured to ward off, until her hand being severely wounded, obliged her to desist. Her devoted husband was soon brought to the ground, and with a fractured skull languished long, and still lives in a state of insanity. I came up time enough to lift the poor insensible creature from the ground, and indignantly made some remarks on the unsoldier-like conduct of the cavalry hero. From that period he has been my most inveterate enemy. Two years I have languished here: every thing we possessed is gone to procure the commonest necessaries; and had it not been for the kindness of a stranger, I and my family must inevitably have perished. There are many more unpleasant and afflicting circumstances attached to this cruel transaction, but you have the substance, and as my conduct has in no instance been criminal, I fancy you will think my case a hard one."

"I do indeed," replied I, "and sincerely wish it were in my power to liberate you, and in your room place your merciless creditor. But who is the stranger to whom you are so greatly indebted?"

“He is a singular character ; a sort of harmless, simple, fanatical visionary. He generally comes here twice or thrice a week, for the purpose of awakening, as he calls it, the prisoners to a sense of their lost state. Some laugh, others listen, but I believe all respect him. When first he introduced himself to me, his feelings seemed most particularly interested. He looked at my children and their poor emaciated mother till the tears rolled down his cheeks. He then begged leave to say a word in prayer ; and it is astonishing with what earnest eloquence he addressed the Deity in behalf, as he expressed himself, of a sinner and his unfortunate family. When the pious task was over, he enquired if we had taken our tea ? and being informed that such a luxury was beyond our reach, and that neither my wife nor I had broken our fast that day, he started with horror, and leaving us abruptly, I heard him the next moment leading out a hymn in the court. The novelty of this attempt soon drew an audience, and when he had sung a few stanzas and prayed, he delivered a short discourse from these words of St. Paul, ‘ Charity covereth a multitude of sins.’ After enforcing the doctrine of charity in general, he concluded by observing that it was the peculiar duty of the unfortunate to be charitable to those who are still more wretched, because they must know from experience how to feel for the affliction of their fellow sufferers. He then held up that little ragged brat, crying, ‘ of such are the kingdom of heaven, and shall we suffer them to starve upon earth.’ At length, having said a great deal, with much more zeal than prudence, he took the child in one hand, and his hat in the other, and collected, even amongst prisoners for debt, the sum of five pounds ! Then devoutly thanking God for his success, he kissed the child—the prisoners huzzahed—and when he poured the treasure into my wife’s lap, I know

not whether the giver was not more affected than the receiver. In fact, tears flowed from each ; and when he had called down a blessing upon our sociable cup of tea, the unlooked for beverage was swallowed with a relish those only can know, who have been for a length of time deprived of a favourite refreshment."

Here the poor prisoner's attention was attracted towards the other end of the court, and with visible pleasure he noticed the approach of the philanthropic preacher. At the same moment St. Clair advanced and announced the new comer as the companion of his voyage from Jamaica—the individual Gamaliel, so whimsically described by Mr. Ormond in his adventures on board the *Kitty*.

My attention was so much occupied by the preacher, that I noticed not his companion until he cried out, in the well known accents of Roget, "Here he is! I have bring my fellow lodger, Monsieur *Catch a de Lamb*;" then turning to the unfortunate debtor, he drew him aside, thrust a pound note into his hand, and to prevent the effusions of a grateful heart, returned to us immediately.

The meeting of the voyagers was friendly on both sides. The puritan turned up his eyes, sighed and thanked the Lord for having brought them together ; first, for mutual congratulation and thanksgiving, and, secondly, as peradventure it might be a providential interference in favour of an oppressed family, suffering under the curse ; "but by God's blessing," he continued, "towards which my prayers shall not be wanting, they may be regenerated, and saved from the dreadful punishment denounced against the whole human race for the sin of Adam."

At that moment the bell announced the departure of strangers ; and as Gamaliel shook hands with the prisoner, the latter made known Roget's munificence. "The lord be praised!" ejaculated

the preacher. "I'll pray for him most part of this blessed night."

"Pardonnez moi," said monsieur.

"If the Lord spare me, I will," continued the preacher.

"And if you pray for me to-night, I shall wish you at the d—I in the morning. Monsieur Romney—gentilshommes—ladies—dis dismal looking brother lodger have de apartment over mine head—and last night I was ver much disturb vid big noise ;—walk up and down—smack a de hand—call out 'here he is—dere he is.' So I ring a mine bell, and send to know if monsieur vas indispose. I get for answer dat de gentilhomme must not be disturb, for he vas catch a de lamb. So if he pray all dis night for me, and catch a de lamb all last night I shall go vidout sleep two night : den Monsieur Silvous, let me be pray for some oder time."

Gamaliel walked with us as far as Westminster Bridge, and on the road amused us not a little—and surprised us still more—by describing an interview he had lately had with the Bishop of ——. It seems Gamaliel solicited an audience, for the pious purpose of converting his Lordship to Christianity ; whom he very candidly informed, that unless he *put off* the *old man*, and became a *new creature*, he would perish everlastingly. This information, unceremoniously as it was given, the dignified prelate received with the most perfect good humour. He thanked the preacher for the interest he took in his welfare, ordered him refreshment, and doubtless retired with an opinion not very favourable to his sanity.

The idea of converting a bishop to Christianity, is much upon a par with teaching the gamut to a professor of music. The one would be esteemed scarcely a greater insult than the other, and would have been treated by many dignitaries of the church with the resentment it appeared to merit. The

bishop's behaviour, on the contrary, shewed a right spirit, and evinced both the Christian and the gentleman.

When Gamaliel left us, Roget observed, "Dat is ver goot man, Monsieur Romney, if he would not catch a de lamb in de night. His heart is—vat you call—in de right place. He is always look after de Lord—dat is—he look after de poor man, and ven he can do him goot, he tink he find out de Lord at de same time—dat is—he feel someting dat say, de Lord is agreeable—he is ver much please—and dat is goot, ver goot. But vat does he mean about de curse? He cannot tink de Lord would curse. Dat would be bad—ver bad indeed."

I never saw Gamaliel afterwards, but every interview I had with Roget, convinced me more and more of what would be the final end of his career. Some fresh act of religious extravagance, or personal privation, came to light daily. He gave all his raiment to clothe the poor, and allowed himself so scanty a portion of the coarsest food, that his naturally meagre form was become nearly transparent. In short, his friends, after bearing and forbearing, to a degree almost criminal, at length confined him in St. Luke's; where he remains, a melancholy example of the effects produced by wrong notions of religion, and the dangerous tendency certain doctrines have upon weak minds.

CHAP. XXIII.

"THE WORLD."

KENNY.

WE had arranged every thing for our final departure from London, and whilst Ann was completing our packages, I thought it might not be amiss to inform Neely and Jones of my intention to add another volume or two to the Itinerant; particularly as I had other business in the city, and their shop lay in my way.

I had reached St. Paul's Church Yard, and was turning into Paternoster-row, when stepping suddenly aside, to avoid a coach, my foot slipped, and a sprained ankle brought me to the ground. Several persons coming to my assistance, carried me into an adjoining tavern; and as I requested a surgeon might instantly be sent for, the landlord observed, that probably some time would elapse before one could be procured; and that, with my permission, he would request the attendance of a doctor from the country, who had resided some days in his house, and was, he believed, in the coffee room.

To this arrangement I consented, and in a few minutes, a voice on the stairs, that seemed familiar to me, vociferated in a loud and authoritative key, "The gentleman has sprained his ankle, has he? Desire my servant to bring the liniment immediately, merely for the purpose of lubricating the parts, in course." This was followed by the entrance of my old friend, Doctor Hammer, in full

health and vigour ! The moment he recognised me, he started back a few paces—then advancing, he took my hand, and exclaimed, “By all my hopes, Mr. Romney, you are the individual personage I was most anxious to see. Where have you bestowed yourself since our last meeting in Shropshire ? No eclipse—no envious cloud, I hope, has intervened betwixt you and the refulgence of prosperity. But I beg pardon. Your looks denote excess of pain, and curiosity must yield the palm to Esculapius.”

Though I was glad to see the doctor, I wished it to have been in any other than a surgical capacity ; for I had no opinion of his skill. He always appeared to me in the light of an adventurer—a man of many words, but little talent. In the present instance, however, he exceeded my hopes, and the bone returned to its place with a loud crack, but excruciating pain. After this operation, the lubrication commenced, and having bandaged and bound the limb, we had time for further conversation.

“How, my dear friend,” he began, “how, I say, has fortune used you of late ? Your disposition is too unreserved, and your mind too independent, to get forward in this world of hypocrisy. Take my word for it, humbug’s the order of the day. Look at my little chateau in Shropshire—my pigs and poultry—my horse and my cows—it’s a bamboozling world sir, and every man must act his part, merely for the purpose of serving himself, in course.

“Appear to be rich, and friends will flock around you with offers of service ; but if they suspect you to be poor, you are shunned like a bum-bailiff. A bum-bailiff, did I say ? Plague, pestilence, and famine are not more dreaded, in this mercantile, money-loving country, than poverty. ‘Honesty,’ says the old adage, ‘is the best policy.’ So it would

be, if you could thereby insure success. But is not the knave rolling about in his coach, whilst plain integrity walks on foot? Is not the man who makes a fortune—no matter how—courted and caressed, whilst over-scrupulous honesty leaves its votary pennyless; yet such is his infatuation, that he follows the phantom to the walls of a poor-house.

“You and I, my dear sir, are, I conceive, pretty nearly of the same standing in respect to years; but without vanity, I think, I may say, we have not equally profited by experience. I have learnt wisdom from the follies and vices of mankind, and have turned my knowledge to account, whilst you, pardon my freedom, fall a daily sacrifice at the shrine of sincerity, and may moralise feelingly, experimentally, on misery and poverty to the day of your death.”

By the time I reached Northumberland Street, whither the Doctor attended me in a coach, my leg was become very painful; and when Ann took off the bandages, she turned pale at the excess of inflammation it exhibited. “This infernal liniment,” I exclaimed, “is of an exasperating quality, and my poor limb requires soothing. I must have better advice, or dangerous will prove the consequences.”

“Take a woman’s,” said Ann. “You remember the almost immediate effect produced on Mr. Robinson’s leg by Hadfield’s tincture: let me send for a bottle or two; the expense is trifling, and you know the worthy magistrate boasted of it as anti-inflammatory.”

I took the advice of my best friend. The salutary effects were almost instantaneous, and when the doctor called the following morning, and found my leg so cool and comfortable, he exclaimed exultingly, “You see the virtues of my infallible liniment. No irritation, no inflammatory symptoms.

You may now look for a speedy recovery ; whereas if any thing else had been applied, you might have been happy to compound for a month's confinement at least. I can now with confidence make an offer I have long had in contemplation ; but you were no-where to be found, no-where to be heard of, and have, I will venture to say, lost hundreds by your ill-timed seclusion."

"You excite my curiosity, doctor," I replied. "How are these hundreds to be honestly and honourably acquired?"

"By the disclosure of my secret for compounding this invaluable liniment. I have retired from business with a plentiful fortune, and am willing to transfer it to you, not as a matter of barter, but merely for the purpose of serving you in course."

After thanking him for his intended kindness, he continued, "I have plenty of cures never before published : my servant, under different signatures, shall swear to them all ; so that if it be not your own fault, you may make your fortune as I have done."

To obtain a competency was highly desirable, particularly when my time of life, and the rough passage I had had, were taken into consideration ; but the means appeared so dishonourable, nay dishonest, if the doctor's list of cures had no better foundation than the affidavit of his own servant, that I declined being an accomplice in so gross an imposition, and thought any thing preferable to swindling mankind as a quack doctor, though under the sanction of letters patent.

The doctor, no way disconcerted by my refusal, said, "Well, since you will stand in your own light, Mr. Romney, I shall endeavour to make money by the sale of it ; and to enhance its value we must publish your almost instantaneous cure. Your being a public character will be of great service, and materially assist the disposal of it. A little of the

effervescence of imagination, commonly called a lie, just thrown in by way of stimulant, will have great force. Let me see. I think it would be as well to break your leg—a violent compound fracture—with the old story, you know—given up by the faculty, after incurring immense expense—and cured by the infallible liniment in six applications. Lend me a pen ; I'll draw it up, and you shall sign it."

Ann's risible muscles had been at work from the beginning of this rhapsody, and when he took up the pen, she could no longer keep them within bounds.

Her mirth drew the doctor's attention, and looking at me for an explanation, I replied, " My dear sir, you are going upon a wrong scent, and I must, however unpleasant, endeavour to set you right. This cure, as you are pleased prematurely to call it, has not been effected by the infallible liniment. I found my leg in a state of painful irritation, whether by the use of your nostrum or not I cannot say, and had recourse to a tincture of much celebrity in Lancashire, which by a very few applications has produced the effects you see."

It is impossible to express the chagrin and disappointment visible in the doctor's countenance. He laid down the pen, took off his tie wig, rubbed his bald pate, then rising, he walked about, exclaiming at intervals, " Oh ! mighty well, sir—mighty well. Jacob Hammer, Esq. dubbed M. D. by the college of Aberdeen—after travelling east, west, north, and south—and bestowing time and the greatest ingenuity in forming, contriving, mixing, and amalgamating certain potent bodies into one grand restorative—is now to yield the palm to a little, insignificant, mock medicine, made by some paltry pretender—a nobody-knows-who. Sugar of lead and salt petre, I suppose. Poison a parish for sixpence, and rot a regiment of grenadiers for a crown. And pray, Mr. Romney," added he with

a sneer, "what is the title and price of this balsamic elixir of life? Some two-penny business, I suppose."

Ann presented the bottle, and observed, "that Hadfield's tincture, though not *called* infallible, had nearly *proved* itself so, by its wonderful effects, both internal and external; whilst, at the same time, the price being only half a crown, rendered it easily attainable—a remedy for the *poor* as well as the *rich*."

"Aye, I knew it was some two-penny business," replied the doctor. "I never heard of any Lancashire medicine worth a farthing, except the Whitworth doctor's red bottle, and that is fit only to lubricate the ligaments of a horse."

Wishing to conciliate, I requested he would inform me whether it were possible to obtain a sufficient knowledge of the use of medicine at any time of life, to enable me to administer in the capacity of an apothecary.

"The use of medicine!" replied he with a sneer. "My real opinion is, that its greatest use is to fill the pockets of professors, and destroy the stamina of fools; thereby rendering wars less necessary, by killing off, *secundum artem*, thousands who might otherwise fall by the sword."

Although I strove by every effort of ingenuity to lead the doctor into a forgetfulness of what had passed respecting his darling liniment, I found a wound had been inflicted that would not easily be healed; and after passing an hour in forced and uninteresting conversation, he took his leave.

For a fortnight I was confined to the house, and during that period was agreeably surprised by a letter from a friend in Manchester, inclosing ten pounds for the use of the poor man in the King's Bench. To this gentleman I had made a statement of the prisoner's situation, knowing that a mercantile connexion formerly subsisted between

them, and that the goodness of his heart would incline him to serve even a stranger under unmerited misfortunes—and happy was the result.

The first day of my emancipation Roget brought a coach, and accompanied me to the British Bastile, where many-visaged misery, incalculable, unavoidable, and frequently undeserved, triumphs; whilst the perplexing and glorious uncertainty of the law feasts and fattens on the distresses of mankind.

As we moved slowly up the court, a man with a pompous strut approached, whom I soon perceived to be the dramatic veteran Gloster. His appearance was thoroughly respectable, which led me to suppose he was, like myself, a visiter. But the moment we met his eye, he gave a theatrical start, and exclaimed, "Ha! Mr. Romney here! Are we both in exile? Co-mates in calamity? Has the strong arm of power laid you in durance vile?"

He was proceeding in his rhapsody, to the great amusement of all within hearing, when I stopped him by a shake of the hand, and said in my turn, "What brings you to Elsinour?"

"A truant disposition, good my Lord," replied he. "In short, Mr. Romney, a disposition to carry on the war in a proper and legitimate way brought me here. But not being exactly up to the sound and regular system, I was detected, and sent to jail for a novice."

"Explain," said I.

"You left me," he continued, "at Speckington, practising the mysterious art of an exciseman, with an inkhorn at my button hole, a gauging stick in my hand, and a salary of fifty pounds a year. This, you will say, was a poor remuneration for a man of my parts, whose loyal exertions in singing down Jacobins, and shouting church and king, deserved well of his country. However, I argued the mat-

ter thus. What are the salaries of official gentlemen in general without the *perquisites*? Why nothing, as the great Windham observed, but ‘candle ends and cheese parings:’ So I considered the fifty pounds as a little ammunition towards carrying on the war, but looked to the *perquisites* as the grand resources; and to work I went like a grand financier. I fraternised with the brewers, liquor merchants, and landlords, who in return filled me with all good things.

“The supervisor was well stricken in years, and when he lay comfortably under the sod, why not I as well as another? It so happened that this worthy man and your humble were gauging a large vat: some how or another he stooped too low, and being old and feeble, could not recover himself, and was precipitated headlong into the brown stout. There stood I, horrified as you may well suppose; indeed my presence of mind had so far forsaken me, that I omitted giving the alarm. Recovering at length to some degree of recollection, I made the place echo with my cries; but, alas! it was too late. The poor supervisor had slipped out of the world, and I stepped into his shoes. Landlords, brewers, liquor merchants, all rejoiced. The old man had been too particular, and talked about conscience, honour, principle, and things little understood; and from experience they found that was not my mode of carrying on the war. But the d—l’s in it, Mr. Romney: the best and most loyal intentions do not always succeed. I, who have been labouring in a regular and legitimate way, like a pious monk or holy friar, bestowing benedictions on those who were most likely to pay me well for my indulgences; I, who attended the worthy supervisor with tears to his grave, and lost my voice for a fortnight with shouting at the Pitt Club; I, who have left the truncheon and helmet for the gauging stick and ink bottle, am destined at last to

become a deer in Lord Ellenborough's park, fraternising, ruralising, and shepherdising with the offscourings of the country ; and instead of carousing with the clergy at church and king dinners, to live on sprats and small beer at the King's Bench prison. *O tempore ! O mores !*"

From this account I was led to conceive that Gloster's mode of carrying on the war was not so justifiable as I could have wished. In fact it appeared in so black a light, that I wished myself out of his company. Not to mention his meanness and servility, I had a suspicion that the poor supervisor's expedition into the brewing pan was not altogether unassisted. Filled with these surmises, I thus addressed him ; " Mr. Gloster, from the account you have given of yourself, I am led to pity your present situation less than I otherwise should have done. You know my idea of carrying on the war, as you call it, differs materially from yours. Hypocrisy, servility, and dissimulation, are, it must be confessed, the regular steps to preferment ; but I countenance them not, and would sooner starve with integrity, than live in luxury obtained by means so base and detestable. And give me leave to observe, that your conduct towards the unfortunate supervisor, leaves a strong impression on my mind of your criminality ; for if you did not expedite his death, you might have prevented it by timely interference."

" Why, you see, Mr. Romney, as to moralising and scrutinising too deeply into these things, it is not my way ; but surely you do not mean to infer that I precipitated him into the porter tub. No, no. Murder would be going too far, though perfectly legitimate, according to the new reading. Well, sir, after holding an official situation under government, I am incarcerated, stigmatised, and pauperised for two gallons of brandy, as you shall hear. After winking at the frailties of my friends, a little

cognac at my own house would, I thought, be consoling ! so I seized a small keg of a rascal who did not choose to pay for winking, and placed it in my cellar, as part of the fees of office. The scoundrel, suspecting my intention, made enquiry, and brought the myrmidons of the custom-house, who seized the individual keg, and about twenty others, that I had snugly deposited as a corps-de-reserve, to carry on the war in case of accidents. Thus ended all my air blown bubbles. I was turned out of office—my creditors heard of it—and a thimble-ising, cabbageising son of the shop-board placed me here to grow wise at leisure.”

My opinion of Gloster was now fully confirmed. His want of principle was evident ; yet there was an unaccountable degree of impudent sincerity in his recital, that almost led me to fancy the whole a fabrication.

We now proceeded in search of the object who brought us to the prison, when I found, to my great satisfaction, that he had been released by some error in the proceedings, and that numerous and liberal contributions had enabled him to clothe his family, and carry them to Lancashire.

We were on the point of departure, when Gloster approached, and with unnatural levity exclaimed, “ And now to supper with what appetite you may. It’s hard carrying on the war with an *empty stomach*, Mr. Romney.”

There was no standing this. I had made up my mind to cut acquaintance with so unprincipled a character ; yet the thoughts of leaving a fellow creature in want, when a trifle would afford at least temporary relief, was what my nature could not bear. I put a pound note into his hand, and as we left him he whispered in my ear, “ He hath a tear for pity, and a hand open as day to melting charity.”

“ Vat did dat fighting man say ?” said Roget,

when we were seated in the coach. "Did he want money? was he poor?"

"Both, Roget."

"Mon Dieu! I would have given him some, but he does not want to carry on his way, and I do not lose my money to go that way."

I made no answer, but fell into a reverie, brought on by reflections on my past life; the vicissitudes of which had led me into an intimacy with such a variety of characters, and the retrospect occupied my mind until we reached Northumberland-street.

CHAP. XXIV.

“ SPECULATION.”

REYNOLDS.

EIGHT months had now elapsed since I left my residence in Liverpool, to make my fortune in the metropolis by two plays! Don Quixotte's expedition against the windmills was scarcely a less rational attempt. The profits of the Itinerant were expended—the copy right sold—and after winding up my accounts, I found my finances in a very alarming state, and no means of recruiting them but by an application to the public, either in the regular drama, or by my own exhibition. The latter was most agreeable: accordingly I brushed up my apparatus, and prepared for a campaign. But where to begin——

“ At Cheltenham,” said Ann.

“ You are right,” replied I.

The manager of that theatre had professed a friendship for me—a theatrical friendship, as it proved—a shake-hand—my dear boy—my dear fellow—business.

Having called in our little debts, which, when collected, generally amount to a great deal more than we are aware of, I found our stock of money amounted to the magnificent sum of five pounds! Cheltenham was distant ninety miles, and the journey would exhaust nearly our all. But what of that? This was not the first time the wolf had shewn his ghastly teeth, and yet we had escaped his grasp; why then should we despair? “ The sweet little

cherub" had often extricated the Itinerant and his better half from greater difficulties, and might again.

"We will not despair," said Ann, with a smile on one cheek and a tear on the other; "will we?"

When a little interesting creature, called a woman, turns up her round, affectionate face, and in bewitching tones says, "We will not despair, will we?" what man can behold it without acknowledging a cheering influence. People may talk of the calamities of life; but I say there is scarcely any calamity, short of death, that does not carry an antidote along with it. What could be more painful to feeling minds, used to respectable habits, than a situation like this? Two hundred miles from friends and home, and only five pounds in our purse. Yet with this dark prospect in view, the gloom at once fled from my face, and the weight from my heart; and never did I clasp the syren to my breast with more sincere delight than at the moment she said, "We will not despair, will we?"

Ah, woman! the greatest blessing that God can give to man, what would life be without thee? Celibacy may suit a saint, or a stoic. I have no pretensions to either character; let those who envy, imitate them. For my part, I look for no heaven in which women are not concerned; and in thus following the dictates of nature, I think I am obeying the commands of God.

The lightness of my purse rendering the strictest economy necessary, I took one inside and one outside place for Cheltenham, where we arrived the same evening. Those who are acquainted with this popular watering place, will agree with me that parsimony cannot be practised with much success at the inns; yet at one of these we were obliged to remain until morning, and after discharging the bill, we entered our lodgings with somewhat less than twenty shillings, out of which every necessary for existence was to be provided.

The alarm this depressed state of my finances would otherwise have occasioned, was in some degree set aside by my dependence upon the manager's often professed friendship, and the pleasing intelligence that the town was crowded with visitors, and the theatre well attended. This was cheering news; for if the theatre was fashionable, my performance being entirely new, could not, I thought, fail in attraction.

Flushed with hopes of success, I waited on Mr. Watson, the manager. His reception was cordial, at least it bore that appearance; for "my dear boy"—"my dear fellow"—"my dear lad"—began every sentence. Shakspeare says, "there's much virtue in an *if*." Managers of theatres find much convenience in a *but*; for scarcely ever did I apply to one of this stamp, in expectation of meeting with something like liberality, that this damping monosyllable did not upset all my hopes.

"I should be glad to serve you, my dear boy," said Watson; "*but* we are too well attended to require auxiliary aid. The nights we do not perform, the rooms are opened; and it would be madness to exhibit in opposition to the assemblies. A thought, however, strikes me, my dear lad. Though every night here is engaged, there's a snug little town, called Tewkesbury, only twelve miles off, where they'll *stand* the *gag*. In short, my dear fellow, I've no doubt you'll *do* the *natives* out of the *mopusses* at Tewkesbury; so take my advice, and *hop* the *twig*."

What is called *slang*, was always to me disgusting, and never more so than in the present instance; since it convinced me that Watson's inclination to serve me was confined to unmeaning professions, at a time when there was little probability of putting them to the test. In London, he had talked of my performance as likely to be attractive as an afterpiece at his theatre at Cheltenham, and of

pocketing the *mopusses* at a *ben*. These proposals and professions, it now appeared, were forgotten, or only uttered to fill me with hopes of *something*, when *nothing* was intended.

The state of mind in which I returned to Ann may easily be conceived. All chance at Cheltenham was over, and had I been inclined to follow Watson's advice, the state of my finances prevented it; so that to stay was worse than useless—to depart impossible. Through a life perhaps more variegated than ever man besides myself experienced—in all the various scenes described in this work, many of them most painful—none ever equalled this. Unknown to every creature except the manager, to whom could I apply for pecuniary aid? Yet by some means it must be obtained, or downright want would be the consequence. I had taken the lodging for a week, and all the money I possessed would not discharge it. To increase my misery, that useful evil, a pawnbroker, was unknown at Cheltenham; and seeing nothing in the manager's disposition but selfishness and insincerity, I scorned to solicit a loan where there was a probability of being refused.

Thus situated, even the smiling, cheerful face of Ann underwent a change. Money, that is said to be the root of all evil, I have found by wretched experience to be the corner stone of all comfort; for if destitute, the cardinal virtues are useless, and life itself becomes almost insupportable. A day or two passed, yet nothing offered that could alleviate the irksomeness of our situation. The country, the walks were beautiful, but our hearts were sad. "Is not the state of these sweet birds," said I to Ann as we slowly perambulated the environs of this charming spot, "to be envied? Their cheerful songs express happiness; kind nature has supplied all their wants. They need not money—their food lies be-

fore them. They have no torments in this world, nor fears of it in an another. Whilst man, who proudly calls himself the lord of the creation, is frequently deprived of all comfort here, and is taught to believe that three parts of his species will have none hereafter."

"Do not be ungrateful," replied Ann with a reproaching sigh: "Providence has dealt by us better than we deserve; and if we trust in him, he will not desert us in this time of need."

Ah! how miserable is that man, and how often led to suicide, who finding himself surrounded by distress, and hemmed in by embarrassment, is left to brood in silence, without a friend to share his affliction, or take a part in his grief.

One day as I returned from the post-office, for, though late, I had written to my friends, a gentleman in a large military hat, and soldier-like appearance, accosted me in accents that left me in no doubt of his country.

"Ah! Romney, my good fellow, what brings you to Cheltenham?"

Although I instantly called to mind the person of this gentleman, I could not for the life of me recollect his name, nor where I had seen him. Not liking to confess my ignorance, I felt myself awkwardly situated for a reply, especially as a friend, a powerful one as it should seem, was in my present deserted state an object of serious import, and my want of recollection might injure me in his opinion. Embarrassment I suppose was visible in my countenance; but without noticing it, he continued, "Faith, and have you forgot the freemen of Barnstaple?" Quick as lightning my mind recovered from its lethargy, and I recognised Lord B*****, whose cause, the reader will recollect, I had endeavoured to advocate at the Golden Cross.

This was a most pleasant rencontre, and something seemed to whisper it might prove no unpro-

fitable one. "Your lordship," replied I, "calls to my recollection the evening Colonel C*** introduced me to the electors of Barnstaple, and a curious group they were. Your Lordship's politeness on that occasion lives in my remembrance."

"And it lives in mine, Romney, that you ran away, and left us before the business was half completed; consequently, I had no opportunity of thanking you for the able support you gave me. But, as I said before, what brings you here? Are you a member of Watson's corps dramatique?"

Finding his lordship so accessible, and apparently anxious, I made no scruple of telling him, that I came to Cheltenham with design to deliver a comic lecture, but finding every night engaged, either by the theatre or assemblies, my hopes and expectations had been entirely frustrated.

"Every night," replied his lordship, "sure there's Sunday."

"You joke, my lord."

"Devil a better. But if you don't like Sunday, what think you of Monday morning. I'll tell you what. Romney; you served me by speechifying to the greasy rogues of Barnstaple, and I don't wish to die in your debt; therefore, place my name at the top of your bills for Monday morning, and I'll engage to bring you an audience. I am just now the fashion from *trating* the dear *craturs* with a ball, and not one will refuse to come at my bidding."

Here was a stroke of fortune in my favour! The circumstance that had mortified and disgusted me at the time, would now, in all probability, be the means of recruiting my finances, and in a manner neither irksome nor degrading.

According to Lord B*****'s advice, I engaged the rooms for Monday morning, at a certain expense of five pounds, at a time I did not possess five shillings; but under such patronage I resolved to venture. Accordingly, having shut out the glori-

ous sun to make room for long sixes, and fixed up my small apparatus, I sat behind a screen, in a state betwixt hope and fear, not to be envied, except by a condemned criminal waiting for execution.

Twelve o'clock was the hour I advertised to commence;—the church clock struck, yet not a soul appeared. The fiddlers played "Oh, dear, what can the matter be?" and the heart of the lecturer beat jig time.

"His lordship is perhaps taken ill," whispered Ann.

"His sickness will be death to me," I replied.

Ann sighed. The lights burnt dim. The master of the rooms peeped in—sbrugged up his shoulders—and retired. The fiddlers began to yawn—and the dead march in Saul was a lively air to the tunes they played. Every thing seemed to conspire in adding to my mortification, and I began to form plans to extricate myself from this situation of debt and disgrace; when the distant, pleasing sound of female voices, and the shuffling of many feet, gave note of welcome approach. In a moment every thing changed. The lights resumed their lustre, the master of the rooms entered, bowing to the ground before my Lord B*****, the Duchess of —, and her beautiful daughters. In five minutes the room was brilliantly filled—the fiddles fortissimo struck up "Away with Melancholy"—I adjusted my cravat, and began with a heart light as a reprieved criminal. My spirited exertions were, however, all wasted on air. No one listened, no one was silent; all was confusion and small talk. They came to oblige his Lordship, and the exhibitor was unnoticed, except in a tooth-pick kind of way—a Shuffleton perchance turned his glass, and exclaimed, as if he had just found me out, "A—very well indeed—d—nd good—did you hear that, my lady?" This contemptuous conduct at any

other time would have galled me most heartily ; but now, since the wolf was driven from the door, the butterflies of fashion might have danced a fandango without disturbing my philosophy. My feelings were raised to a pitch no inattention of the audience could depress ; my only wish was to come to a speedy conclusion, and in little more than an hour I retired to my lodgings with nearly thirty pounds in my pocket !

“ Thank God ! ” said Ann.

“ Amen ! ” replied I, no saint more serious.

What a difference a few hours can make in the affairs of mortals ! and what mere pieces of machinery we are ! An empty pocket shall lengthen the visage, contract the brow, and give a seriousness to the whole countenance ; but reverse the matter, and the eye beams with hilarity, the face is rounded with smiles and dimples, and every feature declares that peace and happiness dwell within.

Perhaps I am giving more power to gold and silver than in justice I ought. There are doubtless many other sources of discontent besides poverty ; but as that is the only drawback to my comforts, I must be allowed to paint my own feelings, and in return promise not to quarrel with those who think differently.

Two days still remained of the week for which our lodging was engaged, and that time I determined to remain ; not for the benefit of the water, for one trial had perfectly sufficed. I know not what is the general effect produced ; but it is a fact, that both my wife and I were in a state of delirium after taking only one glass. I was told afterwards, that that effect would have ceased after repeated trials ; but we had suffered too much by the waking vigils of one night, to risk another.

The day after my performance, we were engaged with a theatrical party to dine at the house of

one of the performers; and here I was introduced to the witty and facetious Mr. Williams, better known by the name of *Anthony Pasquin*. In the evening by way of frolic, we went to the celebrated puppet shew conducted by old Seward, well known formerly for his agility as an Harlequin, and his ingenuity in managing his company of wood and wire performers. The piece performed that evening was called Whittington and his Cat, and *Pasquin's* droll and original observations kept us on the broad laugh during the whole of the exhibition.

A real, legitimate puppet shew, was what I had never seen since the dreadful explosion at Chester, related in the first volume of this work. They were gone by, and improvements and alterations had made such inroads upon the old system, that it had fallen into neglect. But here the ancient school appeared in all its original glory and splendour, and Mr. Punch was introduced with great effect. It is difficult to arrive at the origin of this whimsical gentleman's character. From all the traditions I have searched, the only information I could gain is, that the real name is *Paunch*, and that the family came over with William the Conqueror;—that they obtained several privileges and immunities for their services—amongst the rest, the liberty of forming themselves into a corporation; and it is to them we are at this day indebted, for that *glorious, wise and truly useful* body, consisting of a mayor and aldermen, to whose services and industry the *ministers* and the *butchers* are so much indebted. In process of time the name of *Paunch* was corrupted into *Punch*, so that *Punch* and *Paunch* are of the same family.

The person I lodged with, happened to be the conductor of the London wagon concerns, and accidentally going into the warehouse, I observed several large trunks addressed “to John R——y, Esq.” So, thinks I, my dingy relative is come to

Cheltenham to clear his cadaverous countenance from the effects of indolence and East Indian voluptuousness.

I made a kind of promise to the reader in the last volume, that he should hear more of John when we met at Cheltenham; but the man and the subject are altogether so disgusting, so little likely to amuse the public, and so exacerbating to my feelings, to say nothing of the law of libel, that I hope I shall be pardoned if in future I consign him to oblivion.

The city of Worcester was my next scene of action—that beautiful but to me unfortunate town, from whence, the reader will recollect, I escaped by the assistance of my friend Camelford, from the dreadful terrors of a prison. It happened to be the race week, and Mr. Crisp's company were performing, with the aid of Mr. Holman and his daughter. We were received with much kindness by many old acquaintances, and by their advice I was persuaded to remain until the following week, when the company would leave the city; at which time the manager kindly offered me the free use of his theatre.

At the expiration of a fortnight, I made a successful attempt—I say successful, because my old friends deserted me not, although the rain came down in torrents. Had the weather been propitious, I doubt not my emoluments would have answered my most sanguine expectations; as it was, I left Worcester, impressed with gratitude towards many individuals, and peculiarly obliged to the hospitable kindness of Mr. Lingham, Mr. Green, Mr. Degville, and Mr. Shelton, the worthy organist.

It being my wish to reach Lancashire as soon as possible, I made no further halt until we reached Buxton. I had always entertained a strong partiality for this place. The air—the bathing—were to me so invigorating, and attended with such bo-

neficial effects in point of health, that I never approached it without pleasure, or left it without regret. The theatre was under the management of Mr. Thornhill, an indefatigable labourer in the histrionic art; who had for years been attempting to roll the dramatic millstone up the hill of success; but like Sisypheus, he found every effort produced a retrograde motion; still he persevered, animated by the hope of ultimately providing for a *wife* and *ten children*!

He had long steered his theatrical bark amidst the shoals and quicksands of Lancashire, and though seldom favoured with a prosperous gale, still contrived—because backed by honesty and good intention—to keep above water. Buxton was his sheet anchor, and I found both the manager and his company spoken well of by the visitors.

The morning after my arrival, I made it my business to call upon Manager Thornhill, who in appearance and behaviour was an exact contrast to Manager Swell—that is—he was a plain, downright kind of fellow, who thought himself no better than the members of his company, and could exist without toothpicks and bang-up coats, shining boots and tweezers.

He would have risen to receive me, had he not been otherwise employed; his hand, however, was held out, at the risk of dropping a child, for he had one on each knee—the others scattered about the floor, nearly covered it, and it was not without danger of overturning some of them, that I reached the place where he sat. We had exchanged the usual civilities in the usual style, when a person entered, whom I soon recognised as the hero of my youthful days—Waylett—a man who formerly bore away the palm from all country actors, in the lively, gentlemanly parts of the drama. But, oh! what a falling off—what a visible difference had time made in this once handsome man, and respect-

able comedian. There were, 'tis true, the remains of something; his address was easy and unembarrassed; his bow bespoke the gentleman; and his long stride and pompous strut, the actor of the old school. He in some respects resembled Tragedy Tom, described in the first part of this work, with this difference, that ambition formed no part of his character; on the contrary, his present opinion of himself was so humble, that he fancied the lowest parts above his abilities, was continually viewing the dark side of things, and lamenting his incapacity for any undertaking whatever.

As soon as he observed me, he advanced with a solemn visage, and a *giving-out* bow, as it is technically called—that is—such a respectful motion of the body as the actor uses when he announces the play for the ensuing evening.

“Ah! Mr. Romney,” said he, “I rejoice to see you, and yet you bring to my recollection, times so different from the present——” Here he took the room at two strides, then continued—“The gay Lothario, the dissipated Ranger, the lively Belcour, the fashionable Doricourt—were formerly looked up to in the person of Harry Waylett; but now, sir, instead of Belcour, Captain Dudley is my lot, and even that is beyond my powers.—I am scarcely the ghost of what I was—and then my appearance—without a decent coat to my back, or a shoe to my foot, here I stand, a melancholy example of popular applause, and popular gratitude.”

The poor fellow was almost moved to tears by the picture his imagination had drawn; but casting my eye over his figure, I found it more fanciful than just.

“Mr. Waylett,” I replied, “a lapse of thirty years makes a great alteration at our time of life; but your despondence and misconception surprise me more than any visible difference in your person and appearance. Neither a decent coat to your

back, nor a shoe to your foot, sir!—Why you must be deranged to make assertions so unfounded; and give me leave to say, ungrateful and superannuated to——”

“I am superannuated, sir—that’s my calamity; and how can a man who has been *shelved* for ten years, upon a small salary, maintain a decent appearance? Besides my little boy—I think you never saw him Mr. Romney—a sweet fellow—languishes sir for want of education, and I alas! from infirmity, am incapable of supplying the deficiency of fortune. In fact, sir, I am sunk never to rise again, and what will be the end God only knows.”

A heart rending sigh finished this sentence, and having received his weekly stipend, he retired. “Poor Waylett!” I could not help ejaculating as he closed the door; for his former excellences had left a strong impression upon my fancy, and the human mind in ruins can never be an indifferent spectacle to a thinking man.

As I had once had a pressing invitation to visit Macclesfield with my Brooms, I thought the present time most opportune. The distance was only thirteen miles, and as the Baxton company were in the height of their benefits, nothing productive could at present arise from that quarter. Having despatched our trunks by the carrier, we concluded to walk; it would be pleasant, and less expensive. Accordingly on a fine autumnal morning we set forth, accompanied by a beautiful pug dog, called Toby—a present from the manager.

Thirteen miles of hilly ground completely tried the strength of Ann; but where the spirit is willing, trifling inconveniences give way; and we beguiled the last mile by anticipating the pleasures I expected in seeing an old school-fellow, and—as I flattered myself—a friend.

Before I proceed, let me invoke the spirit of philanthropy and tenderness, to the feelings and errors

flesh is heir to ; that I may not in the following relation set down aught in malice ; but keep in mind that we are formed by habit—that early prejudices taint the mind—and that the social ties of good fellowship are frequently sacrificed to what is termed “ keeping up appearances.”

The reader will recollect in the first volume of the second part of this work, a letter couched in warm terms of friendship, signed “ *Melville Horne.*”

In early life this same Horne and his brother were my school-fellows at Chester. His mother and family were methodists of the strictest kind—he became a candidate for holy orders—and entered the church as an evangelical preacher—his life and conduct answering to the principles he preached ; and had not the fire of enthusiasm parched his mind, a more liberal—a better informed man could scarcely be met with. Except once seeing him at Buxton—where, with his amiable wife, he called upon me, and breathed the most friendly wishes for my welfare—I had not met him since our juvenile days ; but the letter received as above, upon reading the three former volumes of the *Itinerant*, gave me reason to think, that the man who spoke so well of the book, would hospitably receive the author.

Filled with this idea, I wrote, whilst dinner was preparing, the following note.

“ Sam. Wm. Romney and his little wife, are just sitting down to dinner, after a fatiguing walk from Buxton ; and shall esteem themselves obliged, if the Reverend Melville Horne will take a glass of wine with them.”

“ How rejoiced he'll be to see you !” said Ann, after I had despatched my note.

Friendless and forlorn in a strange place, the comfort which arises from the consoling company of a friend, and the enlightened conversation of a scholar, filled me with expectations I was anxious to realise, and I thought every minute an hour until the man returned. At length he appeared.—“Well, what answer?” “Mr. Horne was not at home, sir, but expected every minute.”

I was disappointed. I had not calculated upon his absence, though nothing could be more natural; and, like a child balked of its plaything, I could not conceal my chagrin.

“Come,” said Ann, “take a glass of wine, and we’ll drink the Reverend Mr. Horne’s good health. When he arrives, he will return the compliment.”

Two hours passed—still he came not. “He is taking tea,” said Ann, “before he accepts your invitation. But though protracted, ’tis not relinquished, or you would have heard from him.”

When the church clock struck eight, I started from my chair, and pacing the room with a stride almost as long as poor Waylett’s, exclaimed, “This is a degree of contempt I never experienced before, and it hurts me the more, because I look for contrary conduct. But what can be expected from a parson?”

“Now,” replied Ann, “you place yourself upon a level with the most illiberal. Passion, and invective against any set of people, for the faults of one, are cruel and ungenerous.”

“True Ann. You are right. I’ll wash away the sentence with a glass of wine. Here’s reformation —”

“To whom?”

“Those who stand in need of it. Verily I had like to have displeased thee again.”

The waiter entered. “Pray,” continued I, “does parson Horne ever come to your house?”

“Yes, sir, every day, to read the papers. He has been here within this hour.”

“And no answer to my note?”

“None, sir.”

“Fool that I was to suppose a fanatic could feel, or friendship find shelter in the bosom of a bigot!”

The waiter was busied about the sideboard. Whether he understood the full drift of my speech, or whether it was a continuation of his own, I know not—but he said, “You must not mind our parson, sir. He is a little queerish at times.”

“I thought so. Superstition, that deadly foe to every rational comfort, has deranged his intellect. He has classed me with the reprobate, and will not contaminate his soul by further intercourse.”

“Or rather,” said Ann, “has he not a good living—are not his congregation fanatics—and would he not injure his interests by associating with a person in your situation?”

“Let it arise from what contemptible source it may, I’ll think no more of it.”

This determination was scarcely made, when the waiter entered, with the respects of Dr. Johnson, and if I was disengaged, he would be glad to speak with me.

“Desire the doctor to walk in. Who can this be?” added I, “We shall not escape notice, it seems; for though divinity has given us the slip, physic is determined to make us amends.”

Doctor Johnson entered, and I instantly recognised a worthy quaker I once heard speak at Liverpool. He introduced himself in that easy, unaffected manner, so peculiar to these excellent people. “Friend Romney,” said he, after the first salutation, “I saw thy name against the wall, and determined not to pass without taking thee by the hand. Thy wife I presume.”—Then seating himself, he vociferated so fast, that I began to think

the doctor "*a little queerish*" too; and if that were the case—if both the *soul* and *body* curers were deranged—what would become of the good people of Macclesfield? I soon, however, found that this eccentric physician possessed a great fund of useful information—had travelled—and was in truth a kind hearted being, ready to bestow all the service he could on his fellow creatures—whether *sinner* or *saint*.

"Thy entertainment to-morrow evening," said he, "would give me delight, but thou knowest it is not in our way, and might moreover hurt a weak brother. Nevertheless, let me have a ticket,"—for which he presented a pound note, and had got as far as the door, after bidding us farewell, when he suddenly turned round, and with a stentorian voice, led out a hymn. In this we joined as well as we could, and again shaking our hands, he departed.

Thus it is through life.—Pleasure and pain unite to form a mixture; but could the component parts be separated, we should naturally reject every disagreeable particle, and thereby destroy the efficacy of the whole. For pleasure, if taken alone, would soon lose its relish, nay, become tasteless and insipid; but mingled with a due proportion of pain, it is swallowed with avidity, and leaves a flavour upon the palate both delightful and wholesome.

The inference is clear. The *black coat* was the bitter part of the potion, but the *drab* made ample amends.

In this town dwelt a person of respectability, who occasionally made considerable sacrifices to the jolly god. One night he had, for a wager, drank three mugs of ale, provincially called *Tobies*, at three draughts, and on that account acquired the nickname of *Toby*. Disliking the appellation, those who favoured him with it, generally received the contents of his glass, and this he called a *Christening*.

The morning of my performance, as I came out of the bookseller's shop, I missed my dog, and was informed that he ran into the next public house. I followed, and observing him in the bar, where two or three toppers were taking their morning whet, I called pretty loudly, "Toby!—Toby come out, you rogue,"—and instantly received a tumbler of ale in my face; at the same time, a hoarse voice roared out, "That's a *Christening*, and be d—d to you."

Not relishing this mode of baptism, and possessing a stout cane, I turned with intent to pay the fees on the head of the minister; when a person who instantly saw through the mistake, stepped between us and explained the business to our mutual satisfaction; after which, the aggressor was so hurt at his own behaviour, that no concession—no apology would suffice: and though I over and over again informed him that I was satisfied, nothing but my promising to dine at his house would content him. To make short of the story; to the exertions of this gentleman, and the kindness of the Reverend Mr. Davis—who keeps an Academy of the first respectability in the county—I was indebted for a crowded room.

CHAP. XXV.

“ ’TIS BETTER THAN IT WAS.”

EARL OF BRISTOL.

As the coach drove us towards Manchester—near which the juvenile part of my life was spent—the seat of all my former greatness—I could not help reflecting on the vicissitudes of life, and the change produced on the human mind by the reverses of fortune. In the days of my prosperity, few men were more courted; but now—when the lamp of life was burning fast towards the socket—scarcely a breath of friendship could be found to revive the dying embers. This I attribute more to the unjust obloquy attached to actors, than any other cause; yet no rational reason can be urged why the profession should be held in contempt. The very people who sneer as an actor passes, are probably as much beneath him in virtue and intellect, as they fancy themselves superior, because education has perfected them in the best manner of driving a bargain, and at the same time seared their hearts against the soft pleadings of pity and compassion.

These conjointly enable the trader to amass a fortune—without the aid of those attainments, not merely requisite, but absolutely necessary for the stage—when he looks with contempt upon the genius and talent he cannot imitate, and avows his superiority in language and by manners, that proclaim his origin, in spite of the pains he takes to conceal it.

Notwithstanding these observations, I had still some friends in Manchester. The relict of my dear and worthy associate Robert Buckley, mentioned in the former part of this work, countenanced both me and mine. Although raised to a point of elevation that left us at humble distance, neither herself, nor her amiable offspring appeared to feel their superiority of station.

Three lovely and accomplished daughters—educated under the maternal eye—and two sons, good and virtuous, repaid all the fond mother's solicitude: and often, after passing an evening in their society, have I said to my wife, "If ever there was a family completely happy, it is our friends in Mosley-street."

I would fain pay a tribute of gratitude to another superior character, to whose kindness and philanthropy I am greatly indebted. But no words that I *dare* use, would do justice to the esteem and veneration with which I look up to *Mr. Hewett*. As an honest man, a scholar, and a gentleman, he yields the palm to few—his professional celebrity as a lawyer, is held in just estimation—his domestic and social virtues, endear him to his family and his friends—he is charitable and humane—in a word—he is a character rarely found, but when discovered—of inestimable value.

After visiting the few—very few real friends we could boast in Manchester, an ardent desire arose in our minds to visit Saddleworth, the place of Ann's nativity, and dear to my remembrance, from the many scenes of tender anxiety and juvenile affection that there took place. Accordingly, as the weather was fine, though late in autumn, we undertook a pedestrian excursion, and soon arrived at the valley of Saddleworth. But oh! What a change was here! What devastation had time made in the concerns of my wife's family! The old mansion stood where it did, 'tis true; but its for-

mer inhabitants were fled. The old lady—Ann's only surviving parent, under whose hospitable roof the poor found shelter, and the rich regale, had taken up her temporary residence with a grandson; the family estates had passed into other hands; and her sons removed to distant parts of the country. Various and painful were our feelings, on passing the spot where we first became acquainted. Here we met—there we sat—and here we parted. The gardens too—the well-known walks of moonlight memory—the summer-house, where we sat and talked of love. As we thus stood viewing the nursery of our affections, and recounting former scenes of deep interest, only to ourselves; an old, decrepid being hobbled up, and accosted us for charity. His features, though roguely handled by time, brought to my recollection the remains of poor old George, twice my honest and respected servant. That man must be a stoic indeed who could see all these things unmoved. My feelings were previously wound up to a pitch of extreme sensibility, and the appearance of George in a state of mendicacy, and so blind that he knew me not, produced a climax.

“Do you reside in this country honest man?” said I, as soon as my agitation would permit me to speak.

“Close by *Sur*, in a place called Rough Town; and rough enough it is. Although the Lord has sent the gospel amongst 'em I feel it falls i' stoney places, and does na *tay*' root.”

“What, you are still a Methodist, George?” The old man looked up, and began to rub his eye. “Yes *Sur*,” he replied, “the Lord be praised. I am a'most deak, and may lose my life, but I hope I shall never lose my faith. But may I *mak bowd* just to *axe Sur* how *go coom* to know my name? Yore not a preacher I *lippen*.”

“Were you never in Wales, George?”

“Wales !” repeated he, as if endeavouring to recollect past times.

“Aye. Did you never see evil spirits in the hollow of the Welch mountains?”

These few words acted as a stimulant. Again he rubbed his eye, and taking off his hat, exclaimed, “As I’m a living sinner its my *owd measter*.”

“You are right, George. Once again your old master and mistress stand before you, and if power seconded inclination, they would comfortably provide for your latter days. But alas ! though ten years older than when last we parted, I am sorry to say I am not one farthing richer.”

“I ever *towd yo, measter, yo’d* never be rich. One body comes with a dismal tale, and *yo gin* him a crown : another talks of his wife and hungry *childer*, and *yo thinken* no more of a pound, nor some folk would of a penny. This is th’ way to salvation, but its na th’ way to be rich ; and so I *towd yo*, I remember, when th’ poor Welchman’s house *wur brunt* down.”

There was a public house about a mile distant : to this I told George to follow, and by the time he had hobbled up, a homely, but comfortable repast was prepared, and I had the pleasure of hearing an old and faithful servant return God thanks for comforts unexpected, and which he had long known the want of. Ann, at parting, put a pound note into his hand, and to avoid the effects of his gratitude, we abruptly left him. Looking back, however, at about fifty paces distant, we observed this truly pious creature on his knees in the middle of the road, doubtless returning God thanks for so unexpected a blessing, and we pursued our walk with such feelings as the man who is cursed with a callous heart can form no idea of. To such vain and weak have been my attempts at description ; but if my book fall into the hands of souls made of melting matter, and a similarity of feeling pro-

duce one sympathetic sigh, I shall not esteem my labour lost.

As I said above, my mother-in-law resided at this time with her grandson, about three miles up the valley ; and thither we bent our course. Our nephew, John Kenworthy, was a promising young man, just entering into life as a surgeon ; and from his genius, learning, industry, and moral conduct, his friends augured a career of success ; nor have they been disappointed. With this relative we sojourned a few days, and had the additional happiness of finding the parent of my wife in excellent health and spirits.

At this time it so happened, that a great victory had been obtained, and dinners were eaten, and wine swallowed by dozens in all parts of the country. At Mosley, about four miles distant, there was a meeting of clothiers, dyers, dry-salters, &c. who not choosing to be outdone in gluttonising proofs of patriotism, ordered a dinner at the Bull's Head, and the landlord was deputed to request I would favour them with my company.

Now these Bull's Head gentry were not people with whom I could associate, without a considerable sacrifice of time and comfort ; for though they were doubtless well-intentioned people, and could eat, drink, and shout with any of their fellows ; I had been used for many years to a feast that spoiled me for such society—I mean the feast of *reason* ; and this kind of fare I knew was not to be met with at *their* table. With all due respect therefore I rejected the invitation. But the landlord I had known from his infancy, and he displayed such a strong interest in my attendance, that to oblige him, I consented.

The evening previous to the dinner of these loyalists, a select committee was chosen, consisting of Messrs. Indigo, Shuttle, Scribble, West, Warp, and Loom ; who, in the plenitude of their wisdom,

discovered, that my attendance would be accompanied with unpleasant consequences. Speechifying they said would be necessary ; it was a business they were not accustomed to ; and though they might get on pretty well amongst themselves, they should be apt before strangers, who understood and practised these things, to boggle, and so become a laughing stock to the company. Mr. Indigo, the dyer, now got up, and scratching his head, observed, “ This Mester Romney, Gentlemen, is so high *larned*, that he'll be making a play about us ; nay, I should na wonder, if he has us *painted upo' th' scenes* ; therefore, it's my opinion, yo seen, that no strangers should be admitted.”

This resolution was seconded, and carried accordingly ; and when I arrived, the landlord was in a peck of troubles.

I saw by his countenance, that something unpleasant was the matter ; and after much confusion, and many hums and haws, he informed me of their resolution, to admit no strangers, but the real reason of my exclusion I did not learn till some time afterwards. Rejoiced at my escape from these Goths and Vandals, I saw the lank-haired crew drop in with a satisfaction I should have been a stranger to, had I been doomed to form one of their society ; and having partaken of an excellent dinner, to which the landlord would take no denial ; I left the house, and the Saddleworth orators to those enjoyments my presence would doubtless have lessened.

On the borders of Lancashire lies a small but populous town, called Oldham, celebrated for its manufactory of hats, in which prodigious numbers of people are employed, and large fortunes have been made. Knowing this place from my youth, and being intimate with many of the most respectable inhabitants, amongst the foremost of which I shall gratify myself by naming the worthy family

of the Cleggs ; the Rev. Mr. Fawcett ; Mr. Barlow, solicitor ; Mr. Hutton, surgeon ; and that never to be forgotten, kind, hospitable friend of mankind, Archibald Bell, Esq. of Hollingwood—now, alas ! no more !

At this place I had several years before exhibited my Brooms, and now proposed to repeat them for the last time. Amongst the friends who made several days pass pleasantly, I must particularise Mr. William Clegg, whose loss I have to deplore, and ever shall lament. He died soon after I left Oldham, beloved by all who knew him, leaving an amiable wife, and many sons and beautiful daughters, to regret his loss.

In my various acquaintance with mankind, I never knew a more general philanthropist. Though firm in his opinions, which, being of an enquiring mind, materially differed from the unthinking and uninformed ; yet such was his suavity, such the gentleness of his manners, that however he clashed in sentiment, his opponent never parted from him without regret, nor met again without anticipated improvement. There is a painful pleasure (if I may be allowed the expression, and well will it be understood by that part of my readers whose esteem I wish to cultivate) in recording the virtues of dear departed friends ; words, however, can do no justice to my feelings, nor to the truth on this occasion ; and those who were acquainted with the object of my panegyric, will bear me out in the assertion.

A new building was just finished at Oldham, intended to be occasionally occupied as a theatre ; and as I was universally known in that part of the country, it was thought an object worthy my attention. Never lacking courage to enter upon any scheme that bore a face of probability, I began to turn in my mind the means I had of procuring a company, and the chance there was of ultimate success.

'Tis said "a burnt child dreads the fire;" but no burning—no flames could scare away my folly; and the little money I possessed was destined for another attempt at management, although I had already been so severe a sufferer on that head. To make the detail as short as possible:—I engaged performers—purchased scenery and clothes—and, after great fatigue of body and mind, collected a company, in point of ability, more than decent; and passed three months of degrading misery, save and except the pleasant gleams thrown upon me by the kind invitations of worthy and hospitable friends; amongst whom my wife's relations, James Lees, Esq. and his brother, Mr. Joseph Lees, must not be forgotten.

The Manchester theatre was at this time open, under the management of Mr. Elliston, from whose friendship I expected some assistance. And being distant only seven miles, he agreed to perform three nights, taking half the receipts.

This arrangement would have been productive, had the inhabitants of Oldham possessed taste sufficient to appreciate Mr. Elliston's merits; that not being the case, I became a loser by the bargain. Mrs. Jordan, who happened to be exhibiting her rare and acknowledged talents at Manchester, with all that kindness for which she was celebrated, and that liberality she was known to possess, volunteered her valuable services for one night—nay, so scrupulously careful was she not to let any expense be attached to her offer, that she posted the seven miles ready dressed for the widow Cheerly; and after the performance would accept of no refreshment, although I had prepared every thing for her that the season would permit.

What can I say for such disinterested service—and whatever I say, what will it avail? For the object of my praise is, alas, no more!—"gone down the bourn from whence no traveller returns!"

This excellent woman died in France, where the bigots scarcely allowed her Christian burial.

Oh, ye besotted brutes ! sunk in superstition, and o'erwhelmed by prejudice ! Your god is a demon that delights in the blazing faggot, and your devotion the breath that blows the flame ! May the time never return when power in this happy country may light again the torch of persecution. May its speedy decline throughout the world emancipate the minds of millions ! and for ever cease to be a degradation to mankind !

The ups and downs of this life are become proverbial. When a man is once in the ditch of disaster, it is with difficulty he regains his former footing. I considered myself in this hideous ditch, and floundering about in the most filthy part of it ; when a circumstance occurred that entirely changed my way of thinking.

That day's post brought me a letter from the agent of the proprietors, informing me, that the Chester theatre was at liberty, for the race-week—rent two hundred pounds. This proposal I did not hesitate to accept, knowing the race-week was a sure card ; and though burdened with enormous salaries from the auxiliaries I was necessitated to engage, it answered my every expectation. Mr. and Mrs. Mansell, Mr. and Mrs. Barns, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, and Miss Grant, were added to my company, and formed a truly respectable and formidable corps : and after immense expense, trouble, confusion, and discord, I concluded the week, one hundred and fifty pounds in pocket!!!

“ Make a prisoner of every guinea,” my old schoolmaster used to say ; and I make no doubt he practises what he preaches ; but what becomes of the sentinel ? must he starve whilst preventing the escape of his prisoner ? I conceived it my duty, on the contrary, if possible, to make this little sum prolific, and by some other effort increase my

stock ; for the filial affection of Ann had augmented our family by the addition of her mother ; and the hurry and bustle of itinerancy being ill adapted for a person who had always had an establishment of her own, and whose age required quiet and repose, I took a small cottage at Parkgate, in Cheshire, at the annual rent of five pounds. Here I placed my mother-in-law ; and here, thank God ! she is at this moment.

Having settled my little household, I undertook another theatrical campaign, the success of which I will relate.

Manchester races took place just a month after Chester, and the managers having no company to occupy the theatre during the week, I took it, although my actors were dispersed ; and from whence I could procure a party worthy of appearing before such an audience, I knew not. At length, however, I engaged the Buxton company, under the management of my friend Thornhill, and on Whitsun-Monday was met by the whole dramatic corps, with the addition of Mr. Jones, a young man of high respectability, and talents above mediocrity.

Thus supported I commenced the campaign, and notwithstanding I was opposed by a powerful troop at the Circus, the week's receipts rather more than balanced the expenses ; and had I stopped here, all would have been well. But by some unaccountable infatuation, I was led to keep the Theatre open a fortnight longer, during which period the receipts scarcely any night sufficed to pay the music, lights, and bills ; and at the expiration of the time my Chester gains were disbursed, and I was under the necessity of requesting credit for one week's rent, —namely, twenty-five pounds.

Thus, after laying the flattering unction to my soul that fortune was become weary of persecuting me, I found my expectations disappointed, and retired to my cottage at Parkgate, to devise new

means of subsistence; being determined, if possible, to exist without burning my fingers any more in the furnace of management.

As I have elsewhere observed, domestic fireside felicity was the summit of my earthly ambition, and this my cottage of comfort amply supplied, had pecuniary circumstances permitted me to become stationary. But the cup of life would then have been too sweet for the human palate, and existence rendered too desirable.

My small residence stands on an eminence, the base of which is washed by the returning tides of the river Dee, perhaps fifty yards from my cottage door. The Welch mountains on the opposite shore, six miles distant, form an amphitheatre extending north and south, and when the tide is in, it covers an expanse of at least twenty miles, and presents one of the finest views imagination can conceive; comprehending every thing the artist requires to constitute the sublime and beautiful.

A situation like this, to a contemplative mind, who can find “a feast of reason” in the works of nature, and “a flow of soul” in tracing them up to nature’s God, is a mental luxury, and makes ample amends for the various “whips and stings of adverse fortune that flesh is heir to,” and from which few, if any, are exempt.

Thus situated—in full view of what I have endeavoured to describe—I am at this moment endeavouring to throw my thoughts on paper; not for my own amusement—not from any ambition of literary fame—but, if possible, to preserve a continuance of my domiciliary comforts.

Man is formed for society; but there are beings whose mental resources amply compensate for the loss of it. Such, in some respects, am I. With a smattering of science—a small spark of genius—and a mind formed by experience rather than theory—I possess comforts independent of a more so-

cial intercourse with mankind. My cottage, my wife, my music, my books, my pen, and the great attachment I, from a child, entertained for the brute creation, leave me little leisure, and less inclination, to go from my own fireside in search of what is called society, but which too often proves a mental mortification.

CHAP. XXVI.

“WORSE AND WORSE.”

EARL OF BRISTOL.

THE necessities of my little establishment soon became too urgent to permit my continuance at Parkgate, however agreeable or congenial to my wishes; and it was my bounden and immediate duty to launch out into a sea of unpleasant action. My old friend, Manager Thornhill, had just opened the Bolton Theatre: to him I wrote, and finally concluded a fortnight's engagement for a benefit.

To those unacquainted with Bolton, it may not be amiss to state that it is the third town in Lancashire with respect to trade and population; but for civilisation I am afraid we may class it at the fag end. If trade goes well, and there be plenty of money, they are the most besotted, thick and thin supporters of ministers that tyranny could desire: on the contrary, let bad times reduce their wages, and contract their enjoyments, and they instantly become as violent the other way; talk of nothing but reform in parliament, grumble at Lord Arden, old Rose, and the rest of the sinecurists; in short, they are *belly* patriots, and the *stomach* is their political thermometer. If *full*, they belch forth the triumphs of tyranny; if *empty*, they are griped into the humble friends of freedom.

Amongst these Hottentots it was now my lot to be cast, and I escaped from them by miracle. May it please Providence never to place me there again!

—although there are many individuals for whom I entertain a high respect.

I performed a fortnight, and my benefit was fixed with every prospect of success. I was beset for tickets, box places were in general request, and an overflowing house expected;—when, on the morning, as we were rehearsing, the satellites of office informed the manager that the theatre must be closed by order of the boroughreeve, a sort of mayor, or chief magistrate, chosen as “being the most *graceless* and fit man to serve as constable of the watch.” I do not recollect the name of the person who then filled this exalted situation, nor his calling. Whether he was a tailor, a barber, or a cotton-spinner, is of little importance: he was in office, and that he was determined to let me know.

It is impossible to describe the appearance of poor Thornhill when he brought me the dreadful fiat of this sapient Gothamite. The theatre was not to be closed for a night or two, but, as the man said—for *good*. The manager and his ten children, and all his company, were to be deprived of bread; and this it was whispered, loud enough for every body to hear, *on my account*.

In vain I ransacked my memory for some cause—in vain I addressed a letter to the boroughreeve in gentlemanly terms—he either understood not such language, or was ignorant of the common rudiments of learning—not perhaps having taken advantage of the Sunday seminaries—for I received no answer except a verbal one, short and pithy, “*The boroughreeve says yo mun shut up th’ stage play, or by —he’ll mack yo.*”

What was to be done? If the theatre was opened in opposition to this man’s fiat, doubtless great confusion would arise. This my enemies were aware of—this was what they wanted. They procrastinated the notice to the noon of the last day,

thinking I should not have time to give notice that there would be no play, and consequently persevere. But in this they were mistaken. I sent the bellman round the town and environs, called in my tickets, and gave up every hope of emolument.

Had I possessed a turbulent spirit, and persevered in performing, the consequences would have been serious ; and that I should act thus, the boroughreeve was so confident, that a neighbouring magistrate purposely attended with a warrant, ready to fill up, whereby not only myself, but the whole body of unoffending comedians, would have been consigned to Lancaster Castle.

Thus the grand end of this scene of cruelty and oppression was frustrated ; yet the real cause that excited it was unknown, until one of the official myrmidons made a confidential communication. It may not be amiss here to make a slight digression, by which an insight may be given into the minds and manners of the people I was now amongst, and help to elucidate what follows.

There are a set of beings in the world, who, destitute of principle as well as feeling, and anxious to stand forward in the opinions of the powerful, either from motives of ambition or aggrandisement, or perhaps both, care not how they sacrifice truth and justice, so they obtain the object of their views. There is nothing too absurd for them to attempt, or too cruel for them to accomplish. Mole hills are swelled into mountains, and where there is no substance, they grasp at a shadow. To show how these busy, meddling, would-be-great people sometimes expose themselves, and to evince the party spirit that was then prevalent in this neighbourhood, I shall relate a short, but true story.

At the time of the riots in this part of Lancashire, the poor mechanics, deprived of work, and conceiving their misfortunes to arise from manual labour being in less estimation, on account of the

improvements in machinery, and the great power of steam ; were led to commit outrages on property, for which many ignorant creatures suffered. These disorders were by designing people misrepresented to ministers. They were led to believe that a spirit of sedition, if not rebellion, actuated these misguided unfortunates. Had they been acquainted with the real truth, such violent proceedings as afterwards took place would not, I believe, have been permitted.

The candidates for power and peculation conceived this a fine opportunity to ingratiate themselves with government ; and although the disturbances had no more to do with politics than they had with theology, the old hackneyed term Jacobin was again brought forward, and spies were sent amongst the lower orders, who, under the cloak of friendship, first “ tempted to sin, and then betrayed to punishment.”

At this period a person in the neighbourhood, like the “ heaven-born minister,” had formerly been a member of the Constitutional Society ; but finding neither money nor preferment were to be got by it, changed sides, and, like him, also became the persecutor of those with whom he formerly associated. This man, I say, stepped forward as the champion of anti-jacobinism, and the knight errant of the Treasury Board. But vain hitherto had been his attempts, and futile every effort to signalise himself in the glorious cause ; vainly, on his fiery steed, he scoured the streets by day, and the lanes by night, in quest of the disaffected. At length fortune favoured him. As he rode, meditating on the poor figure he should cut in the next despatches to my Lord Castlereagh, he descried at the foot of a hill——what does the reader suppose ? Perhaps a body of ill looking fellows, armed with pikes——perhaps a seditious mob, pulling down the house of some loyal subject, and murdering the in-

habitants ! No : It was none of these. It was neither more nor less, than an innocent disciple of John Wesley, who, mounted on a stool, preached the gospel of peace to about two hundred unoffending hearers !

“ Now’s the time,” thought this busy meddler, clapping spurs to his horse, and galloping in amongst the crowd. “ Disperse,” said he in a tone of authority. “ Disperse, sir !” said the humble preacher : “ we are met together for the purpose of hearing a word or two of exhortation.” “ A word or two of *sedition* you mean, fellow ; but I’ll house some of you.” Having said this, he galloped back into town, and exclaimed as he rode through the streets, “ *I have got my man ;*” and having obtained part of a troop of cavalry, he led them back to the charge ; for the Methodists, conceiving themselves in no fault, removed not till a view of the *warriors* at full speed gave the alarm, when each took to his heels, and left the poor preacher of Methodism an easy prey to the *victorious party*. In vain he expostulated ; on he must go—and on he went—between two horsemen. at a pace he found it difficult to sustain ; but fear of being cut down by uplifted broad-swords produced a vigour almost super-human, and in this state he was brought into town, and deposited in a place of safety ; whilst the *hero* of this *mighty* deed was congratulated on his *courage* and *magnanimity*. I should not omit that the inhabitants assembled in crowds to witness the entrance of this *detected traitor*, and jacobin, jacobin, jacobin, echoed from every quarter.

This exploit, amongst others equally silly, was transmitted to ministers, and formed a feature for the contents of the *green bag*. But what became of the preacher ? Why, he was of course examined, and as nothing could be brought against him, dismissed upon promise of future good behaviour.

But to return. In the session of parliament pre-

vious, various reports—in short a *green bag* full—of rebellious plots and seditious conspiracies, with no stronger foundation than those I have above related, were sent to government by place-hunters and hireling spies. But previous to its production in the House of Commons, a gentleman of *sterling talent*, and *incorruptible independence*, in the true spirit of patriotism, and in full possession of all the particulars, volunteered a journey to London, on purpose to rescue his native town from the obloquy and foul aspersions cast upon it by interested and time-serving sycophants.* The *real and true* state of the case was by this means laid before Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Brougham, and others; and when Lord Castlereagh produced his *famous green bag*, with all the solemnity the seriousness of the business required, Mr. Brougham rose and made a speech before the honourable house that put the bag and its contents at rest for ever.

Mr. Brougham had by this means made himself hateful in the eyes of the secret intelligencer and his friends. I was well known to have been an active instrument in his late electioneering attempt at Liverpool; and although in other respects a harmless individual, and the players still more so; yet to gratify insatiate malice and disappointed ambition, means were taken which it was hoped would consign us indiscriminately to a prison. Added to this, my tickets, being engraved for my own performance, unfortunately exhibited a fat, smiling figure with a *broom* in his grasp. This was easily construed as having reference to Mr. Brougham, whose name is commonly pronounced *Broom*, and was of itself enough to condemn me, in the eyes of those who hated *him* for the service he had rendered the cause

* So highly was Doctor Taylor's service appreciated by his townsmen, that they not only returned him public thanks, but presented him with a silver cup, as a token of their esteem and gratitude.

of truth and justice. But some of the *wise heads* went even further than this. They said "the ticket represented *Thomas Paine* with the besom of destruction in his hand, with which he meant to sweep away social order, and annihilate all distinctions amongst mankind." In short, ignorance, folly, and prejudice were combined against a set of innocent people, who were robbed of the means of existence for a whole week, to gratify the ignorance and caprice of a "proud man, dressed in a little brief authority."

Day after day I employed every means in my power to obtain permission for the company to perform without me; but all was ineffectual. At length I addressed the bench of magistrates, and the injustice of the whole proceeding appeared in such glaring colours, that under their protection I took my benefit, and the company continued to act as before. The noise this oppressive business made in the town, and the unprovoked injury it was well known I had sustained, made such an impression on the thinking part of the people, that the theatre was literally crowded. Even Quakers and Methodists purchased tickets; and after a week's misery, for who, possessing a grain of feeling, could hear the daily complaints of the actors and their children, and know himself, though innocently, the cause, without a degree of anguish not to be described?—I say, after a week's misery, I took leave of some worthy friends, shook hands with the manager, and returned to Parkgate. As I entered my cottage, and cast a look over the vast expanse of water, I could not refrain from making comparisons between the *heavenly* scene now before me, and the *detestable* one I had left, and said within myself, "from *beloved Ferdinand*, the *Inquisition*, the *D—l*, and *Bolton Boroughreeves*, *Good Luck deliver me!*"

Before I take leave of Bolton, I hope for ever in a public capacity, I shall relate a short anecdote.

I think I must before have observed, that the lower classes in Lancashire are extremely clever at sharp repartee and witty reply. The Irish are perhaps the only people that excel them. One evening as I was returning from a party, my way happened to lie past one of the principal inns. The upper rooms were brilliantly illuminated for a loyal dinner on some great occasion, and being rather late, the members had of course taken their dose of animating liquid, for the effects of their orgies were audible in the street; in short, they made such a noise with shouting and thumping tables, that a mob had assembled; and though I knew the purport of the meeting, I was determined to hear the opinions of the people. Accordingly I addressed a weaver, "Pray, friend, what are they making all this noise about?" "Why, sur," said he without a moment's hesitation, "*Mr. Brougham has let th' cat out o' th' bag*, and they're trying to catch it again." This had an instantaneous effect upon the muscles of the bystanders; and as the Lancashire weavers don't restrain their laughter within the bounds of decorum, I left the group, lest their mirth should be mistaken for *disaffection*, and I *innocently* come in for my *share* of the *odium*.

CHAP. XXVII.

“’TIS WELL IF IT TAKE.”

W. TAVERNER.

MY next excursion was to a part of Lancashire more distant, and less liable to be overrun with public amusements. Pedestrianism was now become my favourite mode of travelling. It was delightful in three points of view; it saved coach expenses—no mean object; my feelings were not harrowed by the ill treatment of that noble creature, the horse; and I gained health by the exercise of my muscular powers. The rich and great can form no idea of the degree of independence a pedestrian enjoys. He views the beauties of the landscape—not through the confined window of a coach—the boundless expanse of country lies before him; he can stop to meditate on the sublimities of creation, without having his reverie interrupted by the lash of a whip; or the discordant, hoarse voice of the coachman, terrifying the poor jaded horses into a pace their strength is unequal to. The pedestrian has opportunities of studying character, equally with the coach passenger, with this advantage—he is not compelled to remain in unpleasant society. If a chance comrade on the road prove disagreeable or impertinent—mending or slackening the pace will cut his acquaintance; whilst the coach passenger is pent up for a day—perhaps two or three—with people he would be glad to leave, but cannot. In short—to the man

who is able, and has leisure, I recommend travelling on foot, in preference to all other modes.

Having despatched my luggage, I took my short stick—as Gloster used to say—and in two days reached Blackburn. I had exhibited here some years before, with great success, and had reason to expect a repetition of it, nor was I disappointed. Mr. Sudell and Mr. Fielding* again honoured me with their patronage, and thus encouraged, I conceived myself amply recompensed for all my fatigue and trouble; and after two more nights, I left Blackburn in high glee. For through life, every little gleam of fortune had power to drive away the memory of past evils, and to buoy me up with anticipation of future good.

For the first time for many years, I now found myself a *solitary Itinerant*. The cheering chit-chat—the enlivening, sorrow-scaring society of a little woman, who, for near forty years had shared my fortunes, was wanting; and I looked in vain, after my evening fatigue, for that consolation she never failed to bestow. Under this privation, I, however, continued to keep up my spirits, by reflecting that her aged parent was a gainer by the sacrifice, and that my absence would not be of any long duration.

I had always felt a considerable inconvenience in

* To the former of these gentlemen I am particularly indebted for much kindness, whenever chance has placed me in his vicinity; and I call it with pleasure to memory, as a mark of flattering distinction, that I have been esteemed worthy the notice of a man, who, possessed of a large independent fortune, chose to remain in business, to the certain injury of his property, rather than turn thousands without sustenance, in times of tribulation. Rich men, in general, feed their pride, their vanity, and their passions; they die, and are no more remembered—but the name of Henry Sudell will never be forgotten by the poor around Blackburn, whilst memory holds the seat of reason.

my peregrinations, from the want of a musician capable of accompanying the songs introduced in my Brooms. For though they were, in general, easy, common tunes, they required a style of playing, common fiddlers—and such I was obliged frequently to employ—were unacquainted with. A man of the description I required offered himself at Blackburn, and I engaged him for a month. But a good scarcely ever comes without its attendant evil. This man was most unfortunate in his appearance. He was lame of one leg, and his nose of immense size, bore testimony of a hot liver. To add to this, he was excessively impudent, and fancied himself a wit. His name was Richard Frazier—commonly called in the neighbourhood Fiddling Dick. The night previous to my quitting Blackburn, I sent for him, and the following dialogue will give a strong idea of his character.

“Waiter! tell Frazier to come up stairs.”

“I’ll be with you in a moment, sir—as the man said to his master.” Up he came hobbling, and taking off his hat, continued, “Well, here I am, sir, large as life.” This unpleasant freedom I was obliged to overlook, or relinquish his services; although I did all I could to prevent it, by avoiding every kind of familiarity, and keeping him at as great a distance as possible.

“What will you expect, Mr. Frazier, for your services for a month?”

“As much as you’ll give me, sir—as the mare said to the manger.”

“I’ll give you one guinea per week.”

“Sir, I am as pleased as Punch, and as merry as a fiddler. I’ll take your word, sir, because why?—you’re a gentleman. A guinea’s the sum, and Antonio bound. Mr. Smallshare, the last manager here, offered me fifteen shillings—No, said I—that won’t do for Frazier—because why? you’re

no gentleman—as the bassoon-player* said to the bull.”

“Very well, it’s a bargain. You must be punctual and sober——”

“Or you’ll take toll of my corn bag—as the man said to the miller.”

“We must be at Clithero to morrow evening; so you must set out early in the morning. Get a glass of what you like below stairs.”

“Sir, I’ll trundle down like a bag of brick dust—call for a glass of ale, cold without sugar—and be off for Clithero before the crow pulls off his night cap.”

I found I had to deal with a man who would intrude his conversation upon me, in spite of every discouragement I could give him; and whose assurance and familiarity might render me contemptible in the eyes of respectable people. I therefore made it my business to speak to him as seldom as possible; and as the least approbation would tend to encourage and increase his volubility, I avoided moving a muscle, although at times it was difficult. The next morning I resumed my pedestrian efforts,

* This expression, we suppose, is taken from the story of a Lancashire bassoon-player; who having stayed late at the public house after a village oratorio, and of course, moistened his clay, departed for his residence, which lay at some distance. The night was dark, and going through a pasture field, he chanced to approach the vicinity of a bull, who hailed the appearance of this son of Apollo, by a hollow, sonorous grumble. The enraptured admirer of sweet sounds mistaking this noise for the note of a brother performer, immediately accepted the challenge—took out his bassoon—and exclaimed with true scientific pomposity, “Sound your A, sir.” The bull, not versed in the rudiments of time and tune, preferred an immediate crash; for coming behind the bassoon player, he placed his horns to the seat of honour, and very deliberately tossed him over the hedge. When the enraged musician rose upon his seat, he exclaimed, in Stentorian tones, “I’ll tell you what, sir, you are neither a musician nor a gentleman, by ——”

and after a pleasant walk, through a most romantic country, arrived at the village of Whalley, twelve miles from Blackburn, in high spirits, and with a good appetite—the almost certain effects of air and exercise.

The village of Whalley is most beautifully situated on the banks of a small rivulet called the Odder; on the side of which, and at the bottom of the hill, are still to be seen the remains of an extensive monastery, well worthy the attention of travellers, whose time will allow the indulgence. The landlord of the principal inn, where I ordered dinner, was, I had been informed, a singular character. His attachment to the proceedings of ministers was so strong, and his hatred of the opposition so inveterate, that a rider, happening to let fall some observations, not much to the credit of the former, his horse was instantly ordered out, and the landlord returning into the parlour—where his guest, unthinking of the error he had committed, was carelessly smoking his pipe—thus addressed him;—"Come, I think it's time for *yo* to be moving."

"Moving, man! What do you mean!" said the astonished traveller.

"Why, I mean to be *bowet* a' jacobins, I love my king—he grants me a license to get my bread—and if I tak' in *sich* as *yo*, I *desarve* to be d—d."

"Well, but my friend," replied the rider, "you mistake me. No man loves our good old king better than I do, but it does not follow that I should be in love with his ministers."

"Yes, but it does," said the sagacious landlord. "There's an *owd* saying, 'love me—love my dog.' Beside—what *reet* ha' we to meddle with what doesna *consarn* us? *Dumnot* we pay taxes to be governed—every man to his trade, *yo* *known*. *Yo* pay me for yo'r dinner—so; if it's a good one, what argues it to you how it's cooked?" It was

in vain to contest the matter—the old man was rich and resolute, and the bagman removed to the other inn.

After dinner, as I looked over the Courier, previous to my departure, mine host brought in his jug of ale ; and seating himself familiarly by the fire, enquired “ What th’ great folk were doing up at *Lunnon*.” As I was in no dread of being turned out, I thought I’d try his temper ; and immediately read an extemporaneous effusion, which informed him “ that a change of ministers was in agitation, and that Messrs. Whitbread, Sheridan, Brougham, and Sir Francis Burdett were to be at the head of administration.”

“ The d—l they are !” exclaimed he with a more than ghastly stare, and dropping the jug he was in the act of lifting to his mouth. “ Then the next thing will be that Bonaparte is King of England, and we shall all be made slaves of.”

As I laid the paper down it was not without apprehension that he might look for the paragraph himself ; but I was safe ; for reading was not one of my landlord’s accomplishments ; and as he helped me on with my coat, I said with as much seriousness as I could assume, “ I’ll tell you what landlord. The only way, in my opinion, to put a stop to these barkers and railers in the House of Commons, would be, to have a large pair of stocks in Westminster Hall, wherein all those who had the assurance to oppose the minister should be placed, until they promised to mend their manners.”

“ Ha ! ha ! ha !” he burst forth in high glee, “ I should like to see ’em. One wou’d then ha’ some quietness, but as it is, they’re never satisfied. What would they have, sir ? I say,” raising his voice, “ what would they have ? If they dunnot like th’ country—as one of your great orators said—d—n ’em let ’em leave it.” He shook me by the hand

heartily, as we parted, swearing I was staunch and true, and that if aw th' world wur like me, we should have no grumblers. "Thou knowest but little of the old bailey," thinks I to myself, as I slowly walked down the hill on the way to Clithero.

The approach to this small but neat town, affords the traveller a gratifying prospect. The castle stands on the summit of a hill that terminates an extensive valley, and conceals the town, which lies directly behind it. The building is a modern structure, except the remains of a tower, and this formed part of the ancient castle.

The afternoon was fine, and though alone, I found company in contemplation; and hills, dales, woods and rivulets formed a part of the group.

As I ascended the last hill, I overtook a covered wagon, and as I approached, the tones of a violin struck my ear. Curiosity led me to the hinder part of the vehicle, and I perceived seated amongst the straw, three old women, and Mr. Frazier, my musician in chief. He was playing the black joke, which the females chorused in their way, at the same time passing round a bottle of some mirth-inspiring liquid. When the merry minstrel spied his master, he stopped, and bawled out, "Here am I, sir, drunk as a fiddler; playing the black joke to these ladies, and ever and anon taking a glass of *blue ruin* by way of rosin. Merry as so many beggars in a barn, sing tantara rara, rogues all, rogues all, sing tantara rara, rogues all." This was a general chorus, accompanied fortissimo by Frazier, and I doubt not the words were applicable. Whilst the party were roaring discords, to which the bagpipe is melody, I mended my pace, being determined to reach Clithero as quickly as possible, lest Mr. Frazier's familiarity might draw me into a connexion not much to my credit.

I had procured from a relation in Chorley, a letter of introduction to a gentleman, whose litera-

ry, moral, domestic, and social qualities, are, and will long be remembered, and revered in this country—the Reverend Mr. Wilson, master of Clithero school.

As soon as a cup of excellent tea had produced its exhilarating stimulus, I waited upon this gentleman, whose reception of me was such as the character I had heard of him led me to expect. Luckily he had read the three former volumes of the *Itinerant*, and passed some pleasing compliments—the more pleasing—because originating from a man of sense, of serious information, and a scholar—but above all—a man of liberal opinions—and who thought not by proxy. After a pleasant hour we parted, and the next evening being advertised for my performance, he requested a situation might be preserved for himself and his pupils.

The inn was a good one—every thing excellent in its kind—and I took possession of the armed chair by a good fire, with as much pleasure as Doctor Johnson when he affirmed, that “an armed chair at a tavern, was the throne of human felicity.”

As this was the only room for the accommodation of company, it was impossible to be private, nor did I wish it. Singularity of character was always a treat, and in every circle of society, there was more than a chance of meeting with it. I had not been seated long, when the landlord entered, snuffed the candles, stirred the fire, and with a pleasant smile, observed, “You’ll not be offended, sir, if I inform you that the easy chair on this evening is always given up to the old major.”

“And who is he, landlord?”

“A queer fish, I’ll assure you, sir. We have a Monday night’s club—about twelve—all respectable gentlemen.”

“Oh, the more the merrier. The club is just what I wish, and I’ll give up the chair with plea-

sure. What occupations do the generality of these gentlemen follow?"

"Some one thing, and some another; but all rich, and highly respectable."

"The one *naturally* follows the other you know, landlord."

"Of course, sir—of course. But the major's the cutest hand of them all at a story. To be sure I don't think he always sticks to truth, but that's his business. Then he never goes to church, and that's the worst part of him."

"What, he's a freethinker I suppose."

"Nay sir, I don't believe he ever thinks at all—says it's all '*pop-lolly*.' But if he's not a *free-thinker* he's a *free drinker*, and the best customer that comes to my house. But there's another gentleman attends sometimes; he's above the common stamp about the head piece; very high learned, and they say very rich."

"And very *respectable*, of course."

"Oh yes, sir—to be sure. He has lived here about two years—comes from abroad, they say—and does a deal of good amongst the poor. He teaches a hundred poor boys and girls for nothing—is quite dark—and one of his scholars always leads him about. He never enters any public house but mine, and drinks nothing but water, for which he pays sixpence a glass; for he justly observes, 'you publicans ought to be well paid, sir, it is a sort of human purgatory, and the misery of it should purge away a number of sins.'"

The door now opened, and a corpulent old gentleman, with a bald head, and a good-humoured countenance, hobbled in. I rose, and he bowed politely, as he passed to his favourite chair. "Your servant, sir," said he, as he seated himself, "It is the custom in our country to talk to strangers as if they were fools: telling them what they knew before, that it's a fine or a foul day—or that it's hot

or cold. *Pop-lolly!* I hate such stuff. Now, sir, you look like a gentleman."—I bowed—"you do upon my soul—I'm not joking—and if one gentleman will take a glass with another—for I'm a gentleman too,"—I bowed again—"he just does the thing that is right. Waiter, bring two glasses—what shall it be, sir? name your liquor—here's every thing—and all good."

Before the waiter returned, half a dozen more gentlemen entered. The first was a middle aged man, in regimentals, easily known to be a North Briton from his accent. A pompous pillar of the establishment, next, preceded a smugly dressed grocer; who being churchwarden, and overseer of the poor, discovered the pride of office in his dictatorial manner, accompanied with a plentiful lack of knowledge of his mother tongue. The rest were merely dummys, who smoked, and puffed assent to any thing, and every thing. I was noticed, and frequently referred to with pleasing respect, taking me doubtless for a man of property, the only test—as the landlord seemed to think—of true respectability.

Half an hour passed pleasantly, and I began to think I should support my character of *respectability* for that evening at least, when the landlord informed me that "A person of the name of *Frazier* wished to take a glass with me if I was not engaged, and begged to know if he must come in."

A philosopher would have smiled at this, but I could not. The blood mounted into my face, and passion fired my breast. "Am I to be exposed by this drunken fiddler," thought I, "and rendered contemptible in the eyes of all present?" "I'll speak to the person without," replied I, as soon as I could rally my feelings, and immediately left the room.

In the bar stood *Frazier*—not cap in hand, but

placed on his head in a way that said, "I'm up to any thing." From the impulse of immediate feeling, I should have kicked the scoundrel into the street; but restrained by his crippled state—perhaps more by policy—passion gave way to prudence, and kept me within the bounds of reason. "So sir, you are arrived, I see."

"Yes sir—like a shipwrecked sailor—pretty well drenched."

"Why you are drunk, sir."

"Only a little plashed—as the butcher said to his boots. My fair companions in the cart had a bottle of excellent gin, and we saw it out; because why? its the grand elixir of life—as the quack said to the newspaper."

The fellow's impudence was beyond all bearing; and could I have procured a musician of any description, he should have been discharged on the instant. But on enquiry, I was told there was none in Clithero, or its neighbourhood; so I was obliged to make the best of a bad bargain; and soothe, rather than irritate. For this purpose, I put a crown into his hand, saying, "Let me hear no more of you till to-morrow night."

"I'm off, sir, Frazier has not fiddled to a dancing master five years, without knowing good manners. So, *bones sore*, as the French have it."

When I re-entered the room, the party were conversing on the subject of some improvements that had taken place at Stoneyhurst College; a celebrated and most extensive seminary in the neighbourhood, for the instruction of youth of the catholic persuasion. Having heard and read of this place, I launched out in its praise, and amongst other things, observed, "How happy it was for society, that the bigotry and fiery zeal that formerly actuated that respectable body of Christians, had given way to rationality, and a more charitable feeling towards their fellow creatures."

“*Pop-lolly!*” cried the major knocking the ashes out of his pipe, “you’ll excuse me, sir—its a term I learnt in the wars—and means fudge-leather and prunella—or—in short—what you please. But to return to the subject. I say, their rationality, and charity towards others is all *pop-lolly*. Place them again in power, and you’ll hear the faggot crackling in every corner of the kingdom. You’ll excuse me, sir.”

“Don’t apologise, major,” replied I. “I am an advocate for freedom of speech; but give me leave to differ with you, if it be only for the sake of argument. From hearing various opinions you know, major, we frequently elicit information.” The major bowed assent, and I continued, “You admit of course, that the age is much enlightened—that information is the only antidote for the poison of superstition; and if so—the general spread which has taken place within the last thirty years in this country, must have tended considerably to liberalise religious people of all denominations.”

“I’ll tell you what,” said the grocer; “it’s my way of thinking, that *larning childer* to read and write, is the way to bring ’em up to vice and *immortality*. They get to know too much—it makes ’em grumbletonians, as a body may say, and *disgratified* with every thing; and if they don’t put a stop to it, there will be the d—l to pay i’ this country. I can tell ’em that. Why half the people are *stiptics* already, and never go to church; *orthodox* vagabonds, that ought to be put into th’ Bishop’s court.” The rector smiled contempt. “If I was th’ Prince Regent,” continued the grocer, “I’d put down all these Sunday schools. Poor folk should be looking after their business, instead of looking into books.”

“Why if they looked into books with no more advantage than you have done friend,” replied the major, “I think indeed they had better not meddle

with them. You are an excellent advocate, Mr. Hyson, for ignorance, and every third word you utter proves it."

"You don't know nothing at all major, about what I was going to say, so mind your *milantary canœuvres*, and let me speak about parish business. It was but t'other day I sent off a cart full of paupers, and they were *rumguntious*, because they had been at th' Sunday schools, and could read their passes. I did my best to *incense* 'em, but it would not do, they wanted more money, and more meat."

"'Fore George," cried the major, "want of money and meat was enough to *incense* them, without your aid."

"Exactly," said Lieutenant Coincide, the Scotch officer.

The grocer, finding he had now two antagonists, addressed the last speaker. "Why, lookye, Captain Coincide, I'll just put a bit of a case to you. Here's a man as can just scrattle and live by *day tel* labour, what has he to do with *larning*? Here's another as can do no *mander* o' thing—a man of no *ockipation*—fit for nothing but a *sodier*—what has he to do with *larning*? tell me that."

"Varry just," replied the Lieutenant with a smile of assent.

"Fit for nothing but a soldier, eh?" said the Major. "So when the man is rendered a complete fool by your mode of education, and can neither read nor write, he must go for a soldier? *Pop-lolly*! He'd better go for a grocer. Then you might teach him to march and *countermarch*, and the man being as ignorant as the master, they may split figs together, without the danger of being *rumguntious*, as you call it."

The grocer finding he was no match for the Major, yet not choosing to be awed into silence, again addressed the Captain, as he was commonly called. "I suppose I've made some mistake, as the Major

seems to laugh so ; but I don't care for that. What I've said, I've said ; and it cannot be upset in a hurry. Can it Captain?"

"Certainly not. Ye're right, sir."

"Yes," returned the Major, "he's as right as a person that is wrong can be."

"Just so, Major," said the Scotchman ; "ye've hit the nail upo' the head."

I found from the conversation that this hero from the north was one of those prudent people who wisely determine that sincerity shall never stand in the way of their advancement

One of the dummies having laid down his pipe, and taken up a newspaper, gave the conversation a different turn, by saying, "Wellington, I see, has given the French rascals a drubbing."

"Exactly," replied Scotty. "We have two thousand killed and wounded, but nae person o' respectability : a' subalterns. I was informed that several staff officers were amang the slain ; but when I read the papers, I didna ken ane."

"Ah !" said the Major, impatiently turning in his chair ; "*Pop-lolly* again. You want officers killed, that you may step into their shoes."

"I take it for granted, Major," said the Rector, with much precision and self-approving confidence. "I take it for granted, I say, the worthy Captain does not read the journalists of the day from any such sinister motives. He doubtless rejoices—disinterestedly rejoices—in the success of his country's arms, and glories in the defeat of her enemies."

"Exactly," replied the Scotchman.

"I see with much concern," continued the Parson, "that the right reverend father in God ——"

"*Pop-lolly !*" said the Major.

"I am aware, Major," added his reverence, "of your loose notions on religious subjects ; but this is neither the time nor place for serious remonstrance. As I was saying, gentlemen—the—really

these interruptions are very injudicious, if not impertinent. Pray what was the subject on which I was going to expatiate?"

"You *was* going to say something, sir," replied the grocer, "about the right reverend father —. Was not he, Captain?"

"Just so."

"Oh! aye—yes, I remember. I was going to observe, that I generally look into the obituaries: not in hopes, but in fear, that some person of distinction in the church—some exalted divine—might have been taken from us by the hand of death. When, to my extreme affliction, I this day find that the right reverend Doctor Pluralist —"

Here the Major laughed out, and repeated the word *pluralist*.

"These continual interruptions, Major," said the exasperated divine, "are insufferable. You are as rude and uncultivated as though you had been bred in the Highlands of Scotland."

"Just so," said the lieutenant. "So ye examined the official accounts, reverend sir, and found a worthy minister o' the kirk among the killed and wounded?"

"No, Captain," replied the parson indignantly: "no minister of the *kirk*, but a regular, legitimate prelate of the church of England, formerly of Brazen-nose, but latterly of Tythewell, in the county of Kent, where I was aforetime the incumbent."

"And you left Tythewell for a better living, doctor, or perhaps you held them both," observed the Major, smiling.

"No, Major: I left Tythewell because the Methodists drew away my congregation."

"Aye: this comes of *larning* to read," said the grocer, glad to catch at any thing in support of his former theory. "Had these Methodists been kept to work, instead of idling away their time at Sunday schools, you might have been an *incumbrance* at Tythewell to this blessed day."

The Major endeavoured not to stifle his pleasure at this unintentional home thrust of Hyson's. He laughed aloud, and his chair being upon the poise, fairly upset him into the corner. Many of the company ran to his assistance ; and when comfortably reinstated, he jocularly exclaimed, " Mr. Hyson, you will certainly be the death of me. There is something so whimsical in your mode of speech, that a man should bring into company an additional quantity of animal acidity, to cope with the spasmodic affection his muscles are sure to be seized with in your enlightened society."

The Lieutenant, who had taken up the paper again, and again read over his favourite passage, now observed, with much apparent pleasure, " As I live, gentlemen, I have made a most serious mistake. Instead of two, there are twenty thousand killed and wounded ; and doubtless amongst such a number there must be many officers of distinction."

" It's a pity you were not there, Lieutenant," said the Major in disgust.

" Exactly, Major ; for then I might hae gained promotion."

" And yet there appears to me, who have had some experience in these matters," continued the Major, " to be much more comfort in smoking our pipes by a good fireside, than lying in a field of battle, though we should neither be amongst the killed nor wounded."

" Just so, Major. Ye're right. A gude fire is a gude thing in cald weather."

At this moment the door opened, and a venerable looking man, with a bandage over his eyes, was led into the room by a boy. The respect with which he was greeted, convinced me that he held a high place in their estimation. The Major, in particular, was most assiduous in his attention. Having seated himself, by universal intreaty, on

the opposite side of the fire, he enquired after the health of all present, as well as absent friends. As I was a stranger to the whole party, it was not likely I should be introduced, and his blindness of course prevented my being noticed.

"You are just come in time, sir," said the Major, "to take share in our *pious joy*, that the list of the killed and wounded in the late battle is twenty thousand instead of two thousand."

"*Pious joy*!" repeated the Rector: "Surely you have used an improper word, Major."

"No, I have not," replied the Major. "Are not pious gentlemen in black always brought forward on these occasions, to thank Heaven for the destruction of their fellow creatures? When the French have killed ten thousand, don't they sing *Te Deum*? When the Spaniards have killed five thousand, don't they sing *Te Deum*? And when the English have killed their thousands, they sing *Te Deum* likewise: and this is rejoicing at the destruction of the human race, is it not *Pious joy*? Enemies on all sides sing *Te Deum*, and I sing *tol de rol*; for it's all *Pop lolly*."

"Major, you totally mistake the thing," said the Rector, "and profanely turn serious matters into ridicule. The triumphs of our victorious arms, by land and sea, ought always to be celebrated by public thanksgivings. Were it not our duty, it is highly proper to keep up the dignity of the church. When I was the bishop's chaplain, I remember travelling between Birmingham and Wolverhampton in the same carriage with my patron. I paid his Lordship of course every attention, and never lost sight of him, for fear my services should be wanted. As we were going down a steep hill, myself opposite to his Lordship in the carriage——"

"Aye—aye—that's right;" interrupted the major, "always keep your eye on the corporal."

"I don't know what you mean major," said the

parson, "by keeping an eye on the corporal. Such phrases may suit the discipline of an army, but ill become the dignity of the church. For my part, I always esteem it my duty to pay attention to my superiors——"

"To your interest you mean doctor," said the incorrigible major.

"Your rude and cynical interruptions major are both improper and ill-timed. I'll be judged by you captain, are they not?"

"Just so."

"Aye, but they are well applied, are they not captain?" said the major sarcastically.

"Exactly."

"Besides," resumed the Rector, "the respect that is due to the cloth, and the dignity of the church——"

"Are all *pop-lolly*." The major was proceeding, when the blind gentleman begged leave to make a few observations. The major and the rector laid down their pipes—captain Coincide discarded his darling account of the killed—the grocer looked all attention—in short every countenance expressed a feeling of silent expectation.

When this interesting man first entered the room, his features appeared familiar to my sight, and his voice still more so to my ear; whilst my mind intuitively felt a strong interest in enquiring of itself, who this worthy and uncommon man could be. I ransacked my memory, and set busy imagination at work in every quarter of the kingdom; but all was vain; still his person, his voice, and strong mode of expression, whispered to my heart, "thou art some one who formerly made an interest there." "Gentlemen," said he with a smile of benignity, "you are too severe upon each other. The harmony of society is best preserved, by a due deference to the opinions of others; and I do think that in all contested points, those argu-

ments find an easier, and more pleasant path to the mind, that are couched in forbearance, and terms of respect."

"I grant, sir," said the rector after a short pause, "that conciliation is always to be preferred, and that respect is due from one gentleman to another; but when the dignity of the church is attacked——"

"I do not understand the term as you apply it," said the other.

"No sir? I conceive it is generally understood to mean grandeur, rank, honour——"

"Then my good sir I must take the liberty of saying, the church has nothing to do with it. Priests, bishops, cardinals, and popes may revel in luxuries by splendid establishments; but a church is neither more nor less than a congregation of people, met together for divine worship; and in my opinion, dignity—if men are sincerely devout—is the last thing they would think of.

"What is dignity in general? Why an improper distinction between man and man; immense wealth——distilled from the labour and blood of the poor; extensive domains, luxuries, voluptuousness—in fact, to fare sumptuously every day, whilst those who labour to supply the means—like Lazarus of old—are scarcely allowed the crumbs that fall from the great man's table. In America, Washington, the saviour of his country, despised such dignity. He went to his church like a human creature, and returned like a man. No guards, no attendants, no mark of distinction, save his virtues; and those had a more visible effect on the hearts and features of his countrymen, than all the pomp and pageantry of princes.

"The creatures of dignity are held up like gods, and worshipped like deities; but in the eye of philosophy, the dignity of man is best preserved by self approbation—I mean not that approbation

which arises from self love, but from a consciousness of having exerted our talents, for the good of our country, and the community into which we are thrown."

To the truth of every line the worthy man uttered, my heart bore throbbing testimony; and I became uneasy and distressed beyond description, from an idea that I knew, and yet could not call to mind the venerable orator. When he concluded his speech, a sensation I know not how to describe, recalled to my sluggish recollection—who does the reader think? Why the individual *Master Carr*, with whom I passed such pleasant and improving hours at the Isle of Man.

Confident in my opinion, and impatient of delay, I advanced to where he sat, and taking his hand said, "Pardon me, my dear sir, is not your name Carr?" The old man hesitated. "You throw me into an awkward situation," at length replied he, "I am under the necessity of uttering a falsehood, or of exposing myself to censure—Gentlemen," continued he addressing the company, "it is proper for you to know, that some years ago, to escape the solicitude of a set of fawning sycophants, who loved not me, but my property, I retired to the Isle of Man; and that they might not trace me to my new residence, I dropped my patrimonial name, and was known only by my sponsorial appellation of Carr. Now sir," added he still holding my hand, "permit me to revive past recollections by a sense that has become most acute, since providence deprived me of sight. Your voice is familiar, and my circle of acquaintance at the island was small. Saying this, he gently ran his hand over my face and figure—paused awhile—and then starting as if assured, he exclaimed, "killed you not my Hare?"

"I did."

"Had you no favourite Doves?"

"I had."

"Were you not blessed with a cheerful little wife?"

"I was, and am still, thank God."

"I thank God too," said he grasping my hand, "that you both exist, and that I live to hear it. I am not what I was, Mr. Romney. Time has bereft me of sight, and has doubtless made a considerable alteration in my appearance; yet I am thankful my powers of mind are not impaired."

I trust there is no further occasion to refresh the reader's memory. He will readily call to mind the eccentric, but benevolent man with whom I left my favorite Doves; and from whose just reproof for killing his pet Hare, I felt myself so much lessened in my own opinion. If this be so—he may entertain an idea of my emotions at thus unexpectedly meeting a person whose character I so much revered, and whose opinions were so congenial with my own. I had much to ask and to communicate, but this was not the place; and having promised to breakfast with Mr. Worthington—the real name of my philosophical friend—I bridled my impatience until the morrow.

A conversation followed respecting the Isle of Man—its history, situation, soil, produce, and form of government—but this I shall pass over. When the clock struck nine, Mr. Worthington's guide re-appeared, and having paid for two glasses of water, the good man took leave for the night; and as he left the room reminded me of my engagement, adding, "I have much to say, and much to hear."

After a short silence—"He is an extraordinary character," said the major.

"It's as good as a *sarmon* to hear him talk," added the grocer.

The rector said nothing, but looked disdain.

"Aye, he speaks well, for a man that drinks nothing but water," observed a person, who I afterwards found was a liquor merchant, "I should

think a little brandy added to it would inspire him ; eh captain ?”

“ Exactly, brandy’s a gend thing for the stomach, almost as gend as *woskey*, but I dunna aw together agree in his opinions.”

“ No !” said the major with a smile, “ I thought you made a point of never differing with any body.”

“ Just so, Major. Differences of opinion are apt to promote ill bleed, and destroy the harmony o’ society. But I would just observe, that as he does na set a proper value upo’ the glories o’ successful campaigns, and the well fought field o’ battle, I canna join his way o’ thinking.”

“ And that’s wonderful, Captain,” said the Major ; “ I always understood that the worthy gentlemen from the north, who so numerously favour this country with their presence, find it their interest, generally, to think by proxy.”

“ Major, your remark is illiberal,” said the Rector ; “ and, besides, strays from the subject we were canvassing. Speaking of Mr. Worthington, he is doubtless a person of property and respectability—a man of extensive abilities, and much information—but his thoughts on religious subjects are too loose and irregular, and differ materially from ancient and received opinions. I have long had my doubts that he is by no means orthodox in his creed ; and could I be well assured of it, much as I esteem his character in other respects, I should hold it a duty I owed to my sacred function, to avoid his society.”

“ There,” cried the Major, exultingly, “ there’s *liberality* for you ! Pull the beam out of your own eye, Doctor, before you pluck the mote out of your neighbour’s. Mr. Worthington, I dare say, believes as much as he thinks true, and so do I—but parsons believe according to their salaries. You have three hundred a year for believing that Joshua

made the sun stand still, at the top of a hill, for four-and twenty hours; and for double the sum, you'd believe, that both sun and moon came down into the valley, and danced a fandango: that is, provided it was so set down; and if every man's faith increase according to his pay, an Archbishop, I suppose, will believe any thing, however absurd, improbable or ridiculous."

"Major," replied the indignant divine, "I have hitherto submitted with more patience than I ought to your impiety; and I hold myself inexcusable, if I sanction and countenance your infidelity by longer listening to it. I would not myself be a tale-bearer, but I give you a hint, that if certain expressions should come to the Bishop's ears, and the spiritual court take cognisance ——"

"The Bishop may kiss my—hand," said the Major. "The spiritual court, eh! *Pop-lolly!* The English inquisition, you mean."

The exasperated Rector now rose with a full determination to leave the room; but was prevented by Captain Coincide, who observed, that he was sure they were both o' ane mind, if they could but agree in opinion: and with much persuasion, the parson again seated himself. As he slowly filled his pipe, he looked, I thought, rather pleased at being compelled to stay, and said, addressing the Scotchman, "Captain, your good humour is irresistible, and I'll sit *quamdiu se bene gesserit*."

This kind of altercation carried with it neither pleasure nor instruction; and I had thoughts of retiring, when the parson, probably to change the subject, but most likely to satisfy a curiosity prevalent among them all, to know who I was, and what were my views, observed, "Pray, sir, had I not the pleasure of seeing you amongst the clergy who assisted the Bishop, at the late confirmation at Lancaster."

I certainly was not displeased at this address, because it convinced me, that appearances at least were in my favour. I understood afterwards, that during the short time I left the room, to speak to the facetious fiddler, they one and all set me down as belonging to the church—nay, one person went so far as to say he heard me preach at Preston.

“Excuse me, sir,” said I, in reply to the Rector; “you certainly never had the pleasure, as you are pleased to call it, of seeing me in a clerical capacity, either at Lancaster or elsewhere.”

“I beg your pardon, sir. Then it must have been somebody very like you.”

“Aye, to be sure,” said the Major. Then turning to me, he continued, “The insatiable curiosity of people in small towns is astonishing, sir, and to be equalled by nothing but the fertility of their imaginations. The good Doctor fancies you a pillar of the church, so *of course* does the *all-agreeing* Captain Coincide. He doubtless has discovered a resemblance between you and his chaplain of the regiment, and probably remembers the sermon, in which you so ably discussed the merits of the *killed and wounded*. My mirth-provoking friend, Hyson, will probably identify you as a *Knight* of the *Bag* in the fruit line; and I, sir, though *last*, not least in my *respect* for you, declare you a *gentleman*, whatever be your calling.”

I was beginning a reply, when he stopped me short by his favourite word *pop-lolly*.

“*Pop-lolly*, sir; not a word,” continued he. “I know what you are going to say. ‘Much obliged—undeserved’—and so on. But it’s true upon my soul! Is not it, Captain?”

“Just so, sir. Ye’re right.”

“There; did not I tell you? We always leave our differences to be settled by the Captain, and he *invariably* gives it in favour of the *last speaker*.”

This raised a laugh; but the parson, unsatisfied by his first attempt, determined to make another.

“ May I ask without offence, sir,” said he, “ are you of Oxford or Cambridge?”

“ Neither, sir.”

“ Hum! of Eaton perhaps, or Westminster?”

“ No, sir.”

“ Had not you better, Doctor, enter at once upon the church catechism?” said the Major. “ Though, now I recollect, that will inform you of nothing but the gentleman’s name, and who gave him that name.”

“ Surely, Major, you do not suppose me actuated by so mean a motive as mere curiosity?”

“ Your interrogations, doctor, bear so strong a resemblance, that I scarcely know how to call them by any other name.”

“ You always, Major, put the worst construction upon words and actions that the subject will bear. I dare say if you were to hear me preach a charity sermon —”

“ I should call it all *pop-lolly*. You are right, doctor. Sermons of all kinds, except those preached to our senses by the works of creation, are abominable things.”

“ Fie, fie, Major. I wonder what made you such a universal cynic.”

“ One cause is, the great *love* I bear the *pillars* of the *church*. And now in return, let me ask what made you a rector?”

“ Why, Major, I’ll tell you. I left a very lucrative situation to accept of this rectory, not for the sake of emolument, believe me, but because I was *called*.”

“ *Pop-lolly!*” exclaimed the Major, laughing. “ Had you been *called* to a *curacy*, would you have gone?”

Here was another laugh, and the clock at that

moment striking ten, the hour of departure, each gentleman shook me cordially by the hand, and with respect took leave.

Oh, world—world!—what a strange world thou art! Caressed to-night with eagerness—and to-morrow perhaps ;—but, “let to-morrow provide for itself.”

CHAP. XXVIII.

“THE HALF-PAY OFFICER.”

CHARLES MALLOY.

A VERY few minutes elapsed before the Major returned, and again taking possession of his armed chair—“Now, sir,” said he, “let us just have a single glass by way of night-cap. I went with my party to the door for form’s sake, because the club breaks up at ten; but I always come back for a quiet glass, and shall be most happy if you will join me.”

To this I assented, and having filled his pipe, he continued, “We are a strange people in this good town of Clithero, sir; but we seldom disagree further than you have seen. I have frequently had the parson at the door, but he always returns, and to-night I thought I would stir him up a little for your amusement. His pompous demeanour, and high church principles, are a continual source of entertainment; and he generally concludes with placing me in the ecclesiastical court.”

“Pray, Major, who is the officer that seems to take such delight in the worst, and most to be lamented part of his profession?”

“Oh! his interest in the killed and wounded is prodigious. He has a recruiting party here, and has learnt what, I believe, is but too generally the case—that it is not the business of a man who expects promotion to contradict, or offer a dissenting opinion. In fact, he appears to be one of those

characters, a sensible man cannot hold in much esteem, since he, as well as the parson, judge of mankind by the weight of their purse. The doctor, as I call him, took you for a member of the clerical order; but if you had confessed yourself a poor curate, serving two churches for forty pounds a-year, he would have turned his back upon you, and troubled you no more about schools and colleges than that lump of illiteracy, Hyson. The grocer, I need not inform you, is a silly ignoramus, with just as much feeling as his figs. He is overseer of the poor, and Heaven help those who come under his clutches."

"You have given me the dark side of your club, Major. I hope there is a part of the picture more lively."

"Why, I don't know. The liquor merchant is a good, jolly fellow, and his heart lies in the right place; but, like many more generous souls, he is too fond of his own *physic*, as you may discern by his countenance. The other members of our erudite body are respectable tradesmen, who, from habit, and lack of information, have it not in their power to do much good or harm. But when we speak of your friend Worthington, I want words to express the high opinion I, as well as the neighbourhood, entertain of him. His time is spent in doing good, and rendering service to those who want it. He possesses considerable property, but, unlike too many of our countrymen, he does not squander it in personal indulgences. He is a rigid economist at home, but a spendthrift abroad. He won the hearts of the people here by erecting a school and a dispensary, from which he supplies the poor with learning and medicine gratis."

The communications of the open-hearted Major drew from me the real cause of my journey to Clithero, and of course the way of life necessity compelled me to adopt.

"I am glad you have informed me of your plans," said he, "for two reasons; first, because I may serve you, and, secondly, it will afford me an opportunity of rallying the rector on his penetration. Believe me, I think no worse of you for honestly confessing you are not a man of property; but had the greater part of the company who have just left this room been acquainted with your profession, their attention would have been considerably lessened. 'Tis the way of the world, but I despise it. Property is the grand ordeal whereby to try a man's respectability: genius, virtue, and talent, stand no chance against it; but give me the latter in a russet suit, in preference to stupidity in embroidery. It so happens, that I possess enough of the good things of this world to set them at defiance, and therefore I am looked up to. Were I poor, the parson would not endure my tongue an hour, and I doubt not I should long ere this have been put into the spiritual court, and perhaps excommunicated, for what he calls my infidelity. Come, sir, permit me to drink success to your lecture to-morrow evening."

The openness of my disposition ever led me to be too communicative; but in this instance my confidence was not misplaced. I gave a slight sketch of my career through life, which so interested my companion, that the tear frequently stood in his eye; and when I had finished, he desired me to place his name amongst my list of subscribers for the forthcoming volumes of the *Itinerant*, and to procure him, if possible, a set of the preceding ones.

We were surprised to hear the clock strike twelve—so quick time flies in pleasant society; and the Major, at parting, insisted on my spending an hour with him after my performance the next evening.

Mr. Worthington's house was pleasantly situ-

ated in the outskirts of this neat town, and prettily ornamented with pleasure ground. It was a small, but very compact habitation, and gave a good idea of the dwelling of a philosopher. I found him seated in his plaid gown and velvet cap, before a table, neatly but plainly decorated. On a perch, in one corner of the room, rested a solitary dove, which, on further enquiry, proved to be the only survivor of my once famed carrier pigeons: the other died of old age about six months before. Nanny, for so he called it in compliment to my wife, flew upon his chair as soon as the muffins entered, and to my surprise, she and his favourite cat ate off the same plate.

“This,” said he, “is what I like; harmony amongst creatures supposed to be natural enemies; and this, believe me, would commonly take place, if man, brutal man, did not take a barbarous pleasure in promoting strife and discord amongst them.”

His old housekeeper superintended the breakfast, and during our friendly meal he recounted his reasons for quitting the Isle of Man. “Some few months after your departure,” he began, “I found the ingratitude of the inhabitants of that uninformed place was commensurate with their ignorance and superstition. It appeared to them so uncommon, that a man should devote his time, without emolument, to the instruction of youth, and likewise exercise his knowledge in medicine for the benefit of those who through poverty were unable to procure regular advice, that suspicion began to arise in the minds of some persons, who from education ought to have known better, that I was a spy in the service of the French government. My scholars were interrogated, and my letters artfully opened; but these caused little uneasiness, until my school began to drop off; and when I offered my services to the sick, the doors were shut against me, and the people fled as from a contagion.

“As I could assign no reason for this, having at that time no knowledge of their suspicions, I was naturally hurt; because my power of doing good was frustrated; and I became what in my opinion is the most contemptible of all characters—a useless member of society. You recollect my establishment; my housekeeper Hannah, and my domestic cat—here they both are.” Hannah gratefully smiled—and Puss—as if knowing herself the subject of conversation—jumped upon her master’s shoulder. “To these,” continued Mr. Worthington, “were now added your Doves, the pledges of friendship.” “I beg your pardon sir,” said Hannah, “but if you recollect I did not live with you as a *regular* servant till after Mr. Romney left the Island.”

“Oh true, I believe you are right. Well, as I was saying, my books, my pencil, and the beauties of nature, were my only associates, and added to the monastic life I led, impressed a suspicion upon the minds of those credulous people, that I possessed more than mortal powers—in short—that I dealt in the black art; and a circumstance happened which corroborated that opinion.

“About two miles from my residence ~~lived~~ a family chiefly supported by my means. One day, a daughter of the old woman’s came crying to inform me her sister was dying. I lost not a moment, but provided with some general remedies set forth. The poor ignorant creature was unable to describe the nature of her sister’s complaint, and that I might have a resource, I had the precaution to take one of your carrier pigeons, as the most expeditious messenger I could send, in case any thing else should be wanted—informing Hannah how she was to act, if the bird returned without his master. I soon reached the abode of the sick girl, and when her old superannuated mother saw me approach, there was an agitation visible in her

whole deportment; but ignorant, as I before said, of the reports in circulation, I could only attribute it to her child's illness.

"I am sorry to hear your daughter is sick, good woman, said I."

"She is very bad indeed," replied the aged matron, "and if you can cure her without doing any thing *wrong*, I hope heaven will forgive you all your *sins*."

"Without reflecting upon the tenor of these words, I sought the invalid, and soon discovered that copious bleeding was the only chance there appeared of saving her. For this purpose I felt for my lancets, but in vain; they were left behind. I instantly penned a note, desiring Hannah would bring the instruments with all possible speed, tied it round the neck of my carrier, and gave him his liberty. This simple operation so alarmed the old woman, that she dropped on her knees, and with uplifted hands, begged I would not attempt to *raise spirits* in her house; and when I informed her that I was only sending for my lancets, she appeared to be still more frightened, and retired to a corner of the room, and I doubt not prayed fervently to be delivered from *sorcery* and *witchcraft*.

"In half an hour Hannah arrived—copious bleeding produced the desired effect—and in a few days the girl was perfectly restored to health.

"In a civilised country, this restoration would have produced gratitude; but in the interior of the island, as you very well know, the people are as uninformed as Russian boors, and as superstitious as the believers in *Obi*.

"The next day the girl's illness and cure were blazoned round the country with additions and exaggerations. The *Pigeon* was transformed into an *evil spirit*, attendant on my bidding—*Hannah* was said to be carried through the air on a broom stick.—In short—I was now, past all doubt, a *conjurer*,

and my housekeeper, the most simple and innocent of all God's creatures, a *witch*. So far did they carry their folly, that the poor soul had no peace: the boys hooted, and threw stones at her—her old acquaintance shunned her as an *evil spirit*—and her health was giving way—when I resolved to leave a spot become so dangerous and hateful, and make her the companion of my voyage. We landed at Whitehaven. In the neighbourhood of that place I fixed my family, but seldom remained stationary myself more than a week or two. The ingratitude of the Manx people had sickened me—I was weary of well doing, when nothing but obloquy and reproach attended it—and to vary the scene, I travelled always on foot, as far north as the Highlands of Scotland. Returning through Lancashire, chance directed me to this spot; and as my sight had for several weeks rapidly declined, I thought it high time to settle for life, particularly as I had lately received a large accession of fortune. The country pleased me—I heard a good character of the inhabitants—and for the two years I have resided amongst them, I can give favourable testimony of their worth. I was scarcely settled ere my sight totally failed; and my school establishment, of which you have perhaps heard, helps to fill up several hours in the day, which might otherwise hang heavy; to say nothing of the delight I feel in bestowing knowledge upon those who would otherwise remain in ignorance."

I have avoided interrupting the venerable speaker in this detail; but many were the stops and breaks that really took place. Speaking of his ill treatment at the Isle of Man, I observed, "Is it possible, my dear sir, superstitious as I know these people to be, that they could carry it to such lengths?"

"You are unacquainted," replied he, sighing, "with the power superstition has upon the unin-

formed mind. But why do I confine her power to the *uninformed*? Some of the *wisest* men of the age in which they lived, have left an immortal stain upon their memories from the same cause. The enlightened Hale, at so late a period as the year 1664, executed two widows of Lestoff, at Bury St. Edmund's, for the supposed crime of witchcraft. At a still more recent date, in the Augustan age of English literature and science, when our country was adorned by a Newton, a Halley, a Swift, a Clarke, and an Addison, Judge Powell, of Huntingdon, condemned for the same crime Mary Hicks, and her daughter Elizabeth, an infant of eleven years of age, who were executed on Saturday the 17th of July, 1716. Howell, in two letters, one dated February the 3d, 1646, the other the 20th of February, 1647, says, 'that in two years there were indicted in Suffolk and Essex, between two and three hundred persons for witchcraft, of whom more than half were executed;' and the Honourable Danes Barrington says, 'that thirty thousand persons were hanged for this supposed crime in a hundred and fifty years. My memory could furnish me with many more instances of the effects of superstition, but the recital is too disgusting to be continued.'

"Superstition is the natural consequence of ignorance," replied I; "but that it should have power over well cultivated minds, appears to me almost a paradox."

"You have just heard a few of its effects on gentlemen of one liberal profession; now let us view it in another; from the law we will turn to the gospel. Superstition has always been a useful instrument in the hands of the crafty, and has caused more bloodshed than even tyranny itself." He then opened a drawer, and producing two papers, desired me to read the following:—

“ Copy of a Charm, sold by the Popish Clergy in Ireland, (on account of the jubilee) at one guinea each, by permission, and approved of by the Pope, the original being signed by him.

“ HOLY JUBILEE, 1770.

“ This revelation was made by the mouth of our Lord Jesus Christ to those three saints, namely, St. Elizabeth, St. Clare, and St. Bridget, they being desirous to know something in particular of the blessed passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 1st, I received 30 cuffs ; 2d, When I was apprehended in the garden, I received 40 blows ; 3d, I, journeying to Anna’s house, got 7 falls ; 4th, They gave me 444 blows of whips upon my shoulders ; 5th, They raised me up from the ground by the hair of my head 330 times ; 6th, They gave me 30 blows against my teeth ; 7th, I have breathed 8888 sighs ; 8th, They drew me by the beard 35 times ; 9th, I received one mortal wound at the foot of the cross ; 10th, 666 blows they gave me when I was bound to the pillar of stone ; 11th, They set a crown of thorns upon my head ; 12th, They have spitted at me 63 times ; 13th, The soldiers gave me 88 blows of whips ; 14th, They gave me gall and vinegar to drink ; 15th, When I hunged on the cross, I received 5 mortal wounds. All men or women who will say 7 paters, 7 aves, and a creed daily, in honour of the blessed passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for the space of 15 years, they shall receive 5 graces. 1st, They shall receive plenary indulgence, and remission of their sins ; 2d, They will not suffer the pains of purgatory ; 3d, If it happen that they die before 15 years be ended, they shall obtain grace as well

as if they had suffered martyrdom ; 4th, in point of death, I will not come myself alone to receive his own soul, but also his parents, if they be in purgatory ; finally, I will convert them into everlasting bliss.

“ This revelation hath those virtues, that whosoever shall carry it about him, shall be free from his enemies, neither will he die of any sudden death : and if there be any woman with child, that carries this revelation about her, she shall feel no pain in child-birth : and in whatever part of the house this revelation shall lie, it shall not be infected with any contagious disease, or any other evil : and whosoever shall carry it about him, the glorious Virgin Mary will show herself to him forty days before his death.”

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I + S

(Here the parish priest signs his name.)

“ This little extract,” continued he, giving me another paper, “ is neither law nor gospel exclusively, but a mixture of both.”

“ In the archives of St. Claude, in the mountainous part of Burgundy, is preserved the following sentence.—‘ Having seen all the papers of the process, and heard the opinions of the doctors learned in the laws, we declare Claude Gillon to be fully attainted and convicted of having taken away part of the flesh of a horse, and of eating the same on the first day of March, 1629, (being a fish day.)’ For this offence on the 28th day of July, in the same year, he was beheaded.”

“ After these, my dear sir,” said the good man, “ and innumerable other instances as flagrant,

which that portfolio contains, can you wonder at any thing."

"I *must* wonder, but I will only say, thank God that we do not live in times so degrading to human nature."

"You are right. And from the general dissemination of knowledge amongst the lower classes of society—which it has been the study of my life to promote, and the interest of tyrants to prevent—I live in hopes that those days of darkness and degeneracy may never return. But come, my friend, we have dwelt long enough upon the dark shades of human nature; let us change the subject to your own immediate concerns. I long to know how you have employed yourself during the years of our separation."

As a brief answer to this, I placed the three former volumes of the Itinerant in his hand—having brought them on purpose—and added,—“Those books, my dear sir, will give you a better knowledge of me, than any verbal communication I could make, since they transcribe the thoughts, as well as the actions of their hero. The life of Itinerancy which I have been compelled to lead for the last thirty years, has given me an insight into human nature, few people of my standing can boast. That I have not profited from experience, is, I think, more to be attributed to the conformation of my mind, than any real want of knowledge. There is a yielding easiness in my nature, that has often led me into folly, but I hope, rarely into crime; whilst a lack of worldly wisdom, and a solicitude for the welfare of others, has too frequently led me to neglect my own.”

Having finished our breakfast, Mr. Worthington took me through his school; where a great number of boys and girls were instructed upon the Lancasterian plan. This useful institution, though com-

paratively upon a scale, brought to my mind the seminary established by the catholics at Liverpool, where upwards of six hundred boys and girls are educated on the plan of benevolence. Not a trace of superstition is allowed to interfere in their great work of education. History, geography, and biography, employ the minds of those who are capable of reading; and it is highly pleasing to hear a child of ten years of age—perhaps younger—instead of repeating the tenth chapter of Nehemiah, in the disgusting monotony of the old school, go through one of Addison's excellent essays in the Spectator, in a style that would put to the blush many an adult.

When we had gone through Mr. Worthington's school, and noticed the progress of rising genius, we walked in the extensive play ground; discoursing upon the utility of the establishment, and the benefits that would eventually accrue from it. From this subject he slid imperceptibly into my concerns. "You lecture to-night," said he; "I shall be sure to attend. 'Tis many years since I witnessed a similar performance—George Alexander Stevens was the last, and very highly he amused me. I cannot ask you to dinner, Mr. Romney, because I never dine—never eat animal food—breakfast and tea are my only meals. 'Tis true a dinner is daily prepared; for though *witches* are supposed to feed on air, my old woman requires something more substantial. But you must take your tea with me."

I was on the point of assenting, when the Rev. Mr. Wilson came into the yard. As his name had never been mentioned, I was not aware that any intimacy existed between them. Yet a moment's reflection would have convinced me, that two such men, of minds and knowledge so extensive and similar—could not long remain in the same town, without being known to each other.

Much pleasant and interesting discourse followed the arrival of Mr. Wilson, and I was fancying myself in an intellectual heaven, when a boy came running from the school, and in a loud key, similar to the tone in which he had been spelling his lesson, cried out, "a person of the name of *Frazier* desires to speak with Mr. Romney."

"Am I destined," thought I, "to be a laughing stock, and rendered contemptible in every company, by this drunken, impudent, fiddling scoundrel?" Whilst this passed in my mind, Mr. Worthington had ordered the person to be shewn in. Not being at the moment master of my faculties, I knew not what to do. At length, however, I begged leave to retire, for the purpose of speaking to the man; but ere I had moved a step, he followed the boy into the yard, and with his usual assurance thus addressed him, "There, my little fellow—now you may go—as the dog said to the dish, when he had done licking it."

I leave it to any man of common discrimination, to judge of my feelings in the company of persons whose good opinion I was anxious to maintain, and who, I flattered myself, had no mean idea of my respectability. What would they think? If they judged of the man by the company he kept, my character was in the high road to contempt. The sickening nausea that rises on the diseased stomach of a bilious subject, may convey some notions of my physical sensations. At that moment, I fully resolved, let the ability of Frazier be ever so great, to prevent all further exposure by an immediate discharge. It would naturally be supposed, that the appearance of two such respectable gentlemen would have awakened some feeling of modesty; and that, however he might think himself justified in making free with me, he would have retired, when he saw with whom I was engaged. But no. Without the slightest notice of my friends, he came

limping up to me, and taking some music paper out of his pocket, said, "I have copied the song, sir, as you desired, and I'll be bound its right as my leg; but I am thinking, its a note—perhaps a note and a half—too high for your voice; so if you please,"—taking out his fiddle—"we'll just try it over." He then ran the bow over the strings in the usual manner; whilst I stood fixed and immoveable, at his unparalleled impudence, and mortified at the degraded figure I sustained in the opinion of Mr. Wilson and Mr. Worthington.

A pause took place, which Frazier employed in screwing up his pegs; and rosining his fiddle-stick. At length I cast a fearful glance towards the parson, and beheld his muscles convulsed with spasmodic risibility—eyeing alternately the fiddler and his master. My blind host too appeared fully to conceive my situation, for an irresistible impulse to laugh was evident in his countenance. When my desponding eye came in contact with the worthy divine's, he could contain himself no longer, and a burst followed, in which Mr. Worthington heartily joined. I was glad the affair had taken so pleasant a turn. The general laugh put a stop to Frazier's tuning; who conceiving himself the cause, and possessing his full share of fiddling importance, turned up his face with a kind of grin, that signified more passion than pleasantry. Then eyeing the merry group, he exclaimed, "Eh! what! Frazier's a figure of fun, is he? Then it's time for him to figure off—as the d—I said to the dancing master." Then cramming the bow under the bridge of his fiddle, and placing it under his coat, he hobbled out at a much quicker pace than he entered.

When the mirth had subsided—in which I was surprised to find my friend Worthington take so warm a part—I began to explain—"Don't say another word," interrupted he, "your situation is

obvious even to me. We have transgressed the rules of good breeding; but the singularity of the scene must apologise for it. For my part, I never felt myself more provoked to laughter in my life, and I fear your scraper of catgut will not easily forget it."

"If imagination," said Mr. Wilson, "could work to such an extent upon your muscles, how must I have been situated; who, to heighten the scene, had the singular figure and address of this man to contend against?"

I then informed them who, and for what purpose, I had engaged Frazier; and found that the fame of *fiddling Dick* had reached Clithero, and that his queer stories, and quaint sayings, were proverbial amongst the lower ranks of the inhabitants. Thus relieved from a heavy and unpleasant load of mortification, I took leave of my friends in high spirits; and the result of the business was, that I not only overlooked the fellow's impudence, but felt rather pleased than otherwise, at the entertainment he had afforded.

As I walked up the street, I saw that my bills had been well distributed in the shops, and the inhabitants reading them with much attention. This augured well; but the idea that probably Frazier had taken himself off in a pet, and thereby ruined my performance, checked my towering hopes. For however pleasant the company of my old friend Worthington—however gratifying the attentions of Mr. Wilson—or the amusements of the foregoing night's club—the idea of my cottage lacking its comforts, for want of that bane and source of human happiness—money—almost always threw a damp on my enjoyments. I was, however, pleasingly deceived. On a table in the hall lay his instrument; of course its master could not be far distant.

I rang the bell, and enquired for Frazier. "He is in the bar, taking a glass of peppermint to keep down his gall, as he says, which he finds rising against certain nameless persons. Shall I send him in, sir?" "By all means."

The moment I heard his foot, by way of paving the way to reconciliation, I called loudly to the waiter, "Bring Mr. Frazier a glass of rum and water." On which he answered, "No water, Mr. Waiter, if you please; always neat in a morning—as the lady said to the looking glass."

I found by this that all was well. "Now," said I, as he entered, "we will, if you please, Mr. Frazier, run over the songs."

"I beg your pardon, sir; but Dickey Frazier does not like to be laughed at—except at the end of a good story, and then it's his due. Now, if I had told those gentlemen about Robin o' Burnley's finding his old mother drunk in a wet ditch, and when the horse dung bobbed at her mouth, calling out, 'no more toast, but a little tea, if you please'—there would have been something to laugh at. But to burst out before I had tuned my fiddle, was too bad—as the pig said to the parson."

Having tried my songs, which, to do him justice, he accompanied rather beyond the common style, I once more got rid of his company, with a promise to be punctual in the evening.

As I stood at the inn door, the Rector came down the street, on a sleek, well fed poney, and observing me, rode up. Eyeing me with his quizzing glass, he accosted me in a strain so cool, compared with his over night's address, that I, not immediately recollecting the why and the wherefore—could not help wondering. At length my conception was aroused by—"Pray—a—Mr.—what time does your performance commence?"

"Eight o'clock, sir."

“Will there be any persons of respectability there? Because I should wish to bring my ladies, if the attendance will be reputable.”

The contemptible alteration in the behaviour of this true son of the church, on account of my occupation, filled me with so much disgust, that my democratic blood flew into my face, and nothing would have given me greater pleasure than telling him my mind. But I could not *afford* it. Opulence, I begin to fear would have made me marvelously impudent. Well might Sir Robert Walpole assert, that “every man has his price,”—mine at this moment was rated at the paltry sum of eighteen shillings. The expectation of half a dozen people coming to my performance, through the influence of this proud priest, had power to stifle the feelings of honest indignation, and I treated him with a degree of respect inimical to my feelings. And so it is through life. Interest—powerful interest—sways all mankind; and whether the object be a title or a toy—a mitre or a mouse-trap—a place or a pinch of snuff—feeling yields to it. The parson would bring his ladies—he was a great man amongst certain people—and his evil report was to be avoided. With this flattering unction I lulled my scruples to rest, and presenting him with a bill, respectfully retired.

At eight o'clock Mr. Frazier appeared at his post: the room was respectably filled; and a disposition to be pleased pervaded the whole. This, I need not tell public performers of all descriptions, is the only way by which an audience can hope to be pleased. Applause is the life and soul of an orator. If he fancies himself ever so interesting or comical, a few serious countenances, or marks of inattention, throw a damp upon his endeavours, and from that moment he loses all power of pleasing. This at least is the case with me; but this

night I was encouraged to proceed with energy, and I flatter myself succeeded.

When the business of the evening was over, I attended my appointment with the Major, and found the same party, with the addition of the Reverend Mr. Wilson, who congratulated me on my success. My friend Worthington and the Major likewise paid me many compliments; in short, from one cause or another, I was in an extraordinary flow of spirits; gave opinions—disputed points—especially with the rector—and found I only lacked encouragement to be a d—lish clever fellow.

The Major, after a hit or two at the parson, relative to his misconceptions of the preceding night, turned his artillery against the Scotchman. “Well, Lieutenant,” said he, “what fresh news from the seat of war? Have you refreshed your spirits with another list of the killed and wounded?”

“I have refreshed my spirits, Major; but it’s with a glass of *whoskey*. There’s nae fresh accounts; for ye ken there’s nae paper the day.”

“Gadzooks! I had forgot,” replied the Major. “Well, well, we must live upon the hopes of a good list to-morrow.”

“There is a report that the Duke of Queensbury is dead,” said the liquor merchant.

“Indeed!” replied the Rector very solemnly. “His Grace departed! what an irreparable loss!”

“No loss at all,” said the Major, “except to the *cow-keepers*, and the animals, whether *biped* or *quadruped* I know not, who were daily *feasted* on his *new milk bath*. He peeped through that corner window of his in Piccadilly long enough: I am glad he has made way for a more valuable member of society.”

“I wonder to whom his various honours and titles will descend?” observed the Rector.

“Honours and titles! all *pop-lolly*!” cried the Major. “His money may do good, if it fall into

the hands of a worthy man—a man with a soul to discriminate betwixt usefulness and ostentation.”

“Your treating titles so lightly, Major, may show your wit, but not your sense,” said the Rector. “I say they create a proper distinction in society, whereby due subordination is maintained. But you would have us all upon an equality, I suppose, like the uncivilised, uninformed Americans.”

“The Americans, reverend sir,” said Mr. Worthington, “are neither uncivilised nor uninformed. They despise the *fripperies* of what you call polished society; but, believe me, the more *substantial* good is appreciated as it deserves.”

“No doubt,” added the Major. “The Americans are clever, sensible, long headed fellows, and know the difference betwixt sound argument and *pop-lolly* as well as if they had Princes and Lords to dictate to them.”

“Oh, *much better*, no doubt,” said the Rector sarcastically.

“For once you are right, parson,” replied the Major; “*much better*. For in that independent country, men’s opinions are not swayed by power and rank, as they too often are with us. Who, for instance, amongst the *laity* here, would differ in sentiment with a *Lord*, or amongst the *clergy*, dare to contradict an *Archbishop*? But in America, a man’s a man, without any distinction but what arises from virtue and vice.”

“I wonder, Major, you don’t go to this land of promise, this place abounding in all good things,” said the Rector.

“Had I been my own master at an earlier period of life, I most assuredly should have been a citizen of the United States; but at my age ’tis too late to seek a new country and fresh connexions. I should have been happy there, because I do not think Kings and Bishops are absolutely

necessary to our existence. What say you, Lieutenant?"

"Ye're right, Major. Not exactly necessary."

"And yet they are very well in their way. Don't you think so?"

"Just so. Vary weel certainly."

The Scotchman's tergiversation raised a smile in the countenance of every one present except the rector. The idea of existence, independent of Kings and Bishops, conveyed something to his mind too horrible to be allowed, at least if I might judge from the convulsive shock his nerves appeared to sustain. To smile under the agonies of mental feeling was therefore impossible; and a philippic, very decisive, and probably very rude, appeared to be on the tip of his tongue, when Mr. Wilson, with the suavity of a man, and the gentleness of a Christian, observed, "I would not call your veracity in question, Major: you doubtless think America has many advantages over this country—perhaps she may—but after all, I am inclined to think that your avowed preference is more for the sake of argument, than any real wish to leave the land of your nativity: for divesting one's self as much as possible of prejudice, no country that we know, or have read of, would, I think, be so congenial to a British subject, as this sea-girt isle. We have some things to complain of certainly—so they have in all states—but the good so far out-balances the evil, that a man with a very moderate share of philosophy may sit down contented, especially when he reads of such scenes as have been lately acted on the continent of Europe. When these things arise to an Englishman's imagination, oh! how he hugs himself on his security in a country where neither plague, pestilence, nor battle annoy him; where those dreadful hurricanes and volcanoes that destroy and lay waste whole districts, are known only by report; and where beasts

of prey are never seen, except as harmless objects of curiosity. These things, I say, Major, which desolate and destroy other countries, we are happily exempt from; and surely such exemptions ought to reconcile us to those inconveniences and hardships which all states feel, in equal if not greater proportion."

"What you have enumerated, my dear sir," said Mr. Worthington, "are negative blessings as far as regards England, but they are positive, substantial, and crying evils in the places where they occur, and make our own causes of complaint light in the balance. But because we have comparatively few things to complain of, shall we therefore rest supine? No: A patient labouring under slight indisposition, does not sit down contented, and bless his stars that neither gout, stone, asthma, nor fever rack his limbs, or inflame his blood, but consults the best means of renovating his system, lest the constitution should be destroyed, and rests not until health be restored. So it is with us. We have an ailment, no matter how slight compared to the deep-rooted illness of others, and it is our duty to contend against, and if possible eradicate it. This our state physicians tell us can be easily accomplished, without detriment to a single *useful* member of the body politic, and that the constitution will thereby be strengthened, and restored to its original purity."

"Mr. Worthington," said the grocer, "I do not quite understand the upshot of your discourse, but it sounds to me like *summut* betwixt and betweenish, and that, I take it, is near o'kin to jacobinism."

"I am not accountable for the light in which it may appear to you, Mr. Hyson; but this I will venture to say, that no other gentleman in the room would have put the same construction upon it. I hope I always speak sound, constitutional

language, and whilst I adhere to that, no person who clearly comprehends the meaning of the term jacobin, would *dare* to apply it to me."

"And yet the tea dealer understands the term in its most *comprehensive* latitude," said the Major.

"Don't you, Hyson?"

"Clearly, Major, clearly."

"Come then, grocer, explain for Mr. Worthington's edification."

"Explain!" repeated the grocer in alarm.—
"What—what am I to explain, Major—and how?"

"Why, you are to tell us, since you so clearly understand it, *what* a jacobin is; but *how*, must entirely depend upon your own learning and ingenuity. Come man—what is a jacobin?"

"Why, he's a person that's always finding fault, and's never content, full nor fasting."

"A most unreasonable being," said the Major, "Proceed."

"Nay, Major, I think I could not mend it if I were to talk for an hour."

"I think so too. 'Tis *multum in parvo*. No *poy-lolly* nor waste of words."

Hyson appeared delighted. The Major was generally so severe upon him, that any seeming coincidence of opinion was eagerly seized, and proportionably valued. "There, Captain," said he, exultingly addressing the Lieutenant, "you see I am right at last."

"Exactly," replied the Scotchman.

"I conceive, Mr. Hyson," said the Major, "these people whom you emphatically describe as never content, full or fasting, must be very miserable."

"Miserable! To be sure they are, Major; but it's all their own faults. What do they want? I say, what do they want?"

"Why, grocer, I should not wonder if they want peace, and a diminution of the taxes. Then per-

haps they might be so unreasonable as to wish to do away all sinecures, and what they call useless places, and undeserved pensions. But, above all, their great object appears to me to be parliamentary reform, when, they say, all the rest will follow of course."

"Aye. But they'll never live to see that day I hope. Do you think they will, Captain?"

The Lieutenant had called up one of his most gracious smiles, preparatory to the usual affirmative, when the Rector's servant appeared with his master's great coat and a lanthorn, and this interruption broke up the party.

CHAP. XXIX.

“ ’TIS GOOD SLEEPING IN A WHOLE
SKIN.”

W. WAGER.

BURNLEY was my next object, and I felt, as I had frequently done before, the pain of parting with old friends, or new and agreeable connexions. With regard to Mr. Worthington, it was indeed distressing. Mr. Wilson's kindness had made an impression on my mind, and the Major was so much a disciple of Momus, and had besides behaved so liberally, that I could with pleasure have extended the acquaintance, had circumstances permitted. But the demon of all discord—the grand interrupter of all human felicity—money—laid an embargo upon my pleasures; and to lose time, that might probably be spent to a profitable purpose, in indulgences, however rational, was out of the question.

I therefore summoned resolution, and having taken leave of Mr. Wilson and the Major, entered the dwelling of the philanthropic Worthington. “ You will become superstitious, perhaps, Mr. Romney,” said he, holding out his hand as I entered, “ and take me for a *conjuror* in *reality*, if I tell you your thoughts at this moment.”

“ It will be very strange, my dear sir, if you do.”

“Well, to convince you ; you were thinking in what manner you should bid me adieu, previous to your departure for Burnley.”

“You have exactly stated my thoughts ; but how you became acquainted with them, is beyond my penetration.”

“Thus then it was. About half an hour ago, that facetious gentleman, your violinist, called in a great hurry, not being able to find you at the inn, to know if you were here. ‘For you are well aware, sir,’ said he, ‘that I am not altogether as swift as a race horse, nor as fleet as a crow ; and if we are to perform at Burnley to-night, as report says, Frazier ought to be informed, that he may set his best leg foremost—they are both bad enough. Twelve miles, sir, is not to be accomplished with a short leg and a long one, without a few ups and downs, as the brig said to the Bay of Biscay ; but Mr. Romney may depend upon Frazier : he has only one call to make ; and that, sir, is at a good friend’s, who won’t say you are welcome in the kitchen, as Grouse said through the gridiron. Perhaps, good sir, you never heard that story. It’s short, but d—lish good, and if you please, I’ll tell it you here as we stand.’

“I could not find it in my heart to mortify the poor fellow by a negative ; so he proceeded. ‘Farmer Grouse, sir, lived in Yorkshire, near the Moors, where there was plenty of good shooting ;—not Waterloo nor Algerine shooting—wars were here carried on against the feathered tribe only. Now, sir, farmer Grouse kept a good tap of ale, and was as free with it. So every year, at the twelfth of August, comes down a little man, with his servants, and his dogs, and his guns, and his belts, and his powder flasks—quite an army—as the parish priest said to the paupers. He was a queer looking Jockey, about four feet nothing, and as small as pinwire. He might have been a faucet

maker—one of those chaps that can slip into the inside, and see how their work goes on. But, however, he proved—not a faucet—but a tax-maker; one of those men who take our brass, and do nothing for it: they call 'em *Sign-a-curests*; something like those quacks, I reckon, who will *sign any cure* to cheat folks out of their money. Well, and so—I hope you are not asleep, sir—as the curate said when the congregation were snoring.' 'Oh! no, Mr. Frazier,' said I; 'go on; I am much amused.' 'Are you, sir? Then I'll go on and prosper. Well, sir—this faucet-making, tax-making, cure-signing, little, great man, came every year to Farmer Grouse's, and ate and drank; he, and his dogs, and his horses, and his grooms; and for all this he paid him with an invitation to *Lunnon*. Nobody should be so welcome there as Farmer Grouse, and so forth—as the parson said in his brief. Well, sir; at last some business called him to *Lunnon*, and he determined to wait on the great man, thinking, of course, he would rejoice to see him, and return some of the civilities he had received in Yorkshire. So the farmer knocked at the door of a grand house, was admitted into the hall, and a servant despatched to inform his master that Farmer Grouse was come to see him. 'Od rattle it!' thinks the simple noddie, 'how shall I demean myself amongst grand company, and dinners, and fine doings?' Poor fool! he knew little of coat-making—as the trumpeter said to the tailor, when he set his sleeve in the pocket hole. Well, sir; after kicking his heels in the hall for a good hour, the great man came half way down stairs, and putting his finger through the rails for the farmer to shake, said, 'How do, honest Grouse? Glad to see you in town—sorry I can't stay—but John will make you welcome in the kitchen.' So, sir, off went the farmer, like a dog with a tin can to his tail—for he did not like the

kitchen—as the scullion said to the cook. Well, sir; next summer down comes the tax-maker again; but Grouse was ready for him: and opening the door, he held a large gridiron before his face, through which he put his finger, and sung out, ‘How do, sir? Glad to see you in the country—sorry I can’t stay—but John will make you welcome in the kitchen!’ And there, sir, ends Farmer Grouse and the gridiron.’

“After thanking him for his story,” continued Mr. Worthington, “I asked him if he ever indulged you with any of his curious anecdotes? ‘Oh! no, sir,’ said he; ‘my master tells stories himself, and two of a trade can never agree—as Punch said to the player.’ So, Mr. Romney, I am commissioned to inform you that Crowdero is on his road to Burnley.”

The good man’s motives for repeating Frazier’s nonsense were obvious, and I pretended to enter into the full spirit of it, in order to disguise my real sensations. When the effort to cramp the energy of his own feelings, as well as mine, had subsided, I started up, and wringing his hand, said, “God bless you, my dear sir! It is possible we may meet again, but the chances are against it.”

“A wise man never anticipates misery. Give me a respectable niche in your memory, and leave the rest to fate. Continue to alleviate distress of every description that comes within the reach of your ability, and do as little harm as you can. Let zealots distract mankind by incomprehensible mysteries—by which they fill their pockets and the lunatic asylum—but mind you not their legends. Turn neither to the right nor to the left, but esteem every man your neighbour who stands in need of your assistance. Farewel.” And turning away abruptly, we parted like philosophers, with much feeling, but less folly than might have been expected.

On my return to the inn, I was agreeably surprised to find an acquaintance from Birmingham on the point of setting off for Burnley, who kindly offered me a seat in his gig. This proposal I cheerfully accepted, for the distance was twelve miles, over a cross and rugged road. The way was rendered pleasant by the singularity of my friend's character. He was a little, spirited fellow, in the liquor trade; and as I stood pretty fair in his opinion in point of respectability, I was in continual anxiety lest we should overtake Frazier, who would doubtless have claimed acquaintance, with his usual disregard of time or place. We arrived safe at Burnley, however, without any such unpleasant rencontre.

My companion, whose name was Hatoff, had habituated himself to a very singular mode of abbreviating words, so that at times he was wholly unintelligible. For instance, he called me *Rom*—and when we stopped at the turnpike, he bawled out, “Hollo! *Ope* the *pike*—what—it’s *thrips*, eh?” When we stopped at the inn, he said to the ostler, “Here, *oss*—take the *till*, and put the *po* in the *stay*,” which being interpreted, means, “Ostler, take the tilbury, and put the poney in the stable.”

“Surely,” thinks I, “’tis my fate to meet with singular characters—and it is by no means the most disagreeable part of my destiny; for your every day folks are to me less desirable companions than the beasts of the field. They are faithful and affectionate; but an ignorant, illiterate, prejudiced man, has in general neither gratitude, liberality, nor affection.”

My friend, the little brandy spinner, possessed an excellent heart, and a mind that soared above the common standard; free in opinions himself, and willing to allow the same latitude to others. I had long been acquainted with his character, and

entertained a respect for him, which I believe was reciprocal.

The ordinary was going in when we arrived; and as it was customary for the last comers to take the chairs, we of course became President and Vice. When the cloth was drawn, Hatoff called from the bottom of the table—there were at least ten travellers in different ways of business—"I say, *Rom*, shall we have a *bot*?"

I assented; and the wine being brought, I gave the King, which was drank with that respect it merits, and always meets with. My worthy Vice next gave the *Quee* and *fam*; which not being understood, I explained as Queen and family, and his singular abbreviations caused much mirth.

At length Lord Castlereagh was given, and swallowed by Hatoff with wry faces. He next proposed Lord Cochrane; and this proving equally disagreeable to the other gentlemen, he observed, "Oh! what—it sticks in your *giz*, does it? You gave *Cas*; and though I'd rather have drank the Dey of *Al*,—because, bad as he is, I think him the better fellow of the two—yet down he went, like a dose of jalap. Now I give *Cock*—so dose for dose. I shall give *Frank Bur* next; but whether *Bur*, or *Cock*, or *Cas*, we drink the *to* out of *com* to the *gem* that gives it."

My situation became unpleasant; for I plainly perceived some disagreeable altercation would arise when the wine began to take effect. To obviate this I sang a song, and called upon the vice for another, when he executed, with humourous effect, a burlesque Italian bravura, and gained much applause.

Having hitherto preserved order and decency, I began to think of retiring with some respect, when I felt a gentle tap on my shoulder; and turning my head, beheld the immense proboscis, of purple hue, belonging to the most impudent of all fiddlers, pro-

truding itself towards my left cheek, whilst in his hand he held a bundle of bills. "The printer," said he, "wants to know whether you would choose a few given amongst the company in this room, or postpone it, as Dr. Drowsy did his sermon, to a fitter opportunity?"

Luckily for me, the attention of the company was at this moment directed another way. A young affected, clerical fop, had just finished a song, which some of the company chose to disapprove, on account of its indelicacy. I therefore, addressing Frazier in hurrying accents, replied, "Leave the room, sir, this instant," which he did, repeating something I could not hear, owing to the noise and clamour.

The disputants became more tumultuous; for the sprig of divinity did not choose to be fined for his breach of decorum, and a scuffle took place. Hat-off was soon in the midst of it; for no one loved a *set to* better than he did, particularly when, as the sailors say, "grog's aboard;" but all in good humour—give or receive a black eye with a pleasant smile—then drink to better acquaintance.

The young candidate for canonicals entertained some opinion of himself as a pugilist, having, amongst other requisites for the pulpit, obtained lessons from Professor Crib; and seeing no one in company, from appearance, likely to cope with him, he pulled off his coat, after bestowing several exacerbating epithets on the company, and swore he would knock down the first man who asked him to take another glass by way of fine.

This was nats to my friend, who instantly took his glass, and advancing jocularly, said, "Come, *Par*, take your black strap, and confess your sins." For this he would have received a blow, had he not been uncommonly active; but warding it off with his left hand, he threw the contents of the glass in the other's face, and taking advantage of the mo-

mentary surprise, planted a blow on the nasal organ, which produced a copious discharge of blood, and laid him prostrate on the floor; whilst the little dealer in ardent spirits stood over him like a Bantam cock, exclaiming, "What *Col*, eh? Not brazen nose I'm sure. Come get up, man. You were preparing yourself for the *church*; another round or two, and I'll prepare you for the *church-yard*."

He then squared and threw himself into various postures: this was a-la-Crib, and that a-la-Belcher; in short, he so terrified the prostrate foe, that he chose not to resume an erect posture, lest another experiment a-la-somebody should again floor him.

At length the company, who were satisfied with his deserved chastisement, interfered, and a reconciliation was speedily effected—for Hatoff never lost his gaiety—and seating himself,—with a smile he drank "The church militant."

A basin of water soon rendered the vanquished combatant fit to appear; and he once more took his seat, with a countenance somewhat enlarged, and in speech much improved; for it had now become rational and modest.

What an excellent thing a little wholesome chastisement is, for polishing puppies! and what a pity it is not more frequently applied!

Harmony being restored, and the bottle passing rather more expeditiously than I could afford, either in pocket or constitution, I fixed my eye upon the door, wishing to make my escape as soon as possible; more especially as my little friend began his *Bravura* again, by way of volunteer; a sure sign that the vinous fluid had raised him a few glasses above proof.

In this I was confirmed when he exclaimed, "Waiter! a *Bot* of *Clar*. Eh! *Rom*! I'll stand the *Bot*, cash down—so sit man—*Nunkey* pays for all."

I well knew his generous intention, but my mind was fixed, and as he said in a low voice to the waiter, “*bot of prime—the real stuff—&c. &c.*” I sought my safety by inglorious flight.

As I went up stairs I heard a violin, and was told by the chambermaid, that it was fiddling Dick from Blackburn, playing for the servants, in the kitchen: who was come over to fiddle the next night at some kind of play-shew that was to be done there. *A Shew!* “To what vile uses may we not return!” Mortified pride struggled within my breast! “Down—down perturbed Spirit!”

CHAP. XXX.

“A CURE FOR THE HEART ACHE.”

MORTON.

THE morning arrived, and with it mortification and disappointment. A note lay upon the table addressed to me as follows. “A party of ladies, who wish to attend Mr. Romney’s performance, are prevented, on account of the assembly to-night. *Query*. Would it suit Mr. Romney’s convenience to postpone his entertainment till to-morrow evening?”

This was an awkward circumstance ; but as there appeared to be no other choice, I made a virtue of necessity, and sent an answer accordingly.

My friend Hatoff having finished his business, proposed that I should accompany him to Colne, and return the same night. “Come, *Rom*,” continued he, taking the reins in his hand, “mount the *Til*—Shan’t cast a *cop*—*Nunkey* pays.”

The day was fine—my companion cheerful—so I accepted the invitation—jumped into the tilbury—and away we drove. The road was hilly, and in one of our pedestrian efforts to ease the generous horse, we overtook a miserable object crawling up the hill, as well as weakness would permit, with an infant at her breast. Her garments were patched with different colored rags, and a soldier’s worn-out jacket served to keep her from the cold. She had neither shoes nor stockings, and a man’s hat covered a quantity of hair, which would have been stiled handsome upon the head of a belle of fashion.

It was piteous to behold her feeble attempts at progress, and we passed her to observe whether a front view equalled in wretchedness the posterior one. She appeared young, and maugre the pallid cheek of exhausted nature—handsome.

“*Misericordia!*” said Hatoff, holding up his hands.

“Dreadful!” replied I.

“I’ll stand a *cop* or two.”

“So will I.”

“But stop,” pulling his hand out of his pocket.

“Let’s *exam* the *prem*. I don’t like to be *swind*.”

“No fear of that. You see she does not even solicit charity; therefore be delicate in your enquiries.”

“D—n your delicacy.”

The horse at that moment stopping for breath, I placed a stone under the wheel; and the little man, whose warm heart was overflowing with sympathy, observed, “Our horse is tired young woman, and so are you.”

“Faith and I am, sir, and sick to boot.”

“I say *Rom*. The *sod*, eh? What has brought you into this distress, mistress?”

“Indeed and you may call it distress. It was brought on by the war, and the loss of my husband, your honours. But give me *lave* to take a rest against the wheel of your car, for indeed I am mightily exhausted.”

“Wheel, eh? I say *Rom*, let’s pop her in. Give me your child, mistress.”

“My child! Oh! not for the world would I part with little Pat.”

“Pho, pho! no nonsense, but mount the *til*. I’ll hold little Pat till you are snugly seated.”

She now comprehended his meaning; with a heavy sigh ascended the carriage, and informed us she was travelling to Colne. The hill was long,

and our dialogue continued. "What business have you at Colne, good woman?" enquired Hatoff.

"My husband has a parish there, your honor."

"Were you ever in England before?"

"No, sir; nor I don't wish ever to come again; for they stare at me because I have got the brogue, and *lave* me to starve, because I am an Irish woman, and have no call upon the parish officers. In my blessed country, if a poor body be in want by the way, another poor body will help him; if it is but a potaty and salt, sure he'll divide his morsel with him.—But here, its nothing but scorn that I get, and cross looks, and big words, that make my heart sink within me."

"You shall have something more nourishing than cross looks and big words," said Hatoff, "for here's the sign of the Blue Swine, and please the pigs, we'll drive the wind from your *stom.*"

A substantial meal, followed by some warm ale, into which Hatoff ordered a glass of rum and some sugar, cheered the poor mendicant.

"What do you think our *Sol* of a host informs me?" said he, when we were seated in the gig, "why, he says, we are liable to a *pros* for taking this *wom* and her brat to Colne, unless she can prove her settlement. And I suppose, if we found a man dying in the lane, and preserved his life by bringing him to this house, we should be *pros'd* by the parish officers, for not letting him die quietly in the ditch."

The poor woman, putting a book into his hand, replied, "Your honour will see by that, that Judy Johnson can prove her settlement."

"We found within the book a written account of Jerry Johnson's birth, parentage, and apprenticeship; which, if accurate, was doubtless sufficient.

"Your honours," continued the unfortunate

woman, "are mightily degraded by riding with Judy, and little Pat. But the time has been—I *mane*, when Jerry came a recruiting to Kilmainham, that I was not thought so disparaging. But then we went into Spain; and they ran us up and down so, that I was made light of little Pat by the way side: and if the good *craturs*, the soldiers' wives, had not wrapped him in the clothes from off their own backs, he would not have been now here, laughing, like a thoughtless spalpeen as he is."

"And how long after this did you lose your husband?"

"How long after? Why sure it was a month before. They had been fighting and killing one another the biggest part of one day, and we women always kept in the rear, for fear of bad luck; so, when they had kilt as many as was convenient, they left off; and we females took a cruise amongst the slain, by way of picking up little articles, that would not be of any further service. There could be no harm in that, your honours, seeing their owners were never going to return."

"Certainly not."

"Aye, but the worst is to come. After we had eased four or five hundred dead bodies of those things that would be of no use at all in another world; I got my hand into the pocket of a *sodier* who lay on his face; and there I found a small pocket book, and looking into it—oh sweet Jasus!—it was my own Jerry's, the very book your honours saw just now, and the corpse that turned its back upon me, was no other than poor dear Jerry himself, with the top of his skull blown off. What was I to do then, your honours? you might have taken my life with a jack-straw. But the drums began to bate, and we were obliged to retire; so I left poor Jerry to take his chance—we were sent off in a baggage wagon—and I am thus far towards the end of my journey."

At this moment two horsemen rode up. They saluted us with "hollo !" and a noise betwixt shouting and laughing so loud, that—added to the child's screams, and the barking of a dog belonging to the new comers—I could compare it at that moment to nothing, but the din and confusion of a field of battle—so strong an association of ideas had the widow's story engendered.

After the confusion had in some measure subsided, one of the horsemen exclaimed, "What, in the name of all that's curious, Hatoff, have you picked up?—Is it man or woman?—For I'll be shot if any body can tell by the dress."

"It's the dress of *poor* and *mis*, you noisy *vags*.—It's the uniform of our brave soldiers' widows. So *pony* the *sil*, to put her into better trim."

After enquiring into particulars, they gave Hat-off a pound note, to be employed as he thought fit, and rode on. "Let them laugh that win," said my friend, giving the paper to poor Judy. "'That's a christening present for little Pat.'" "Indeed, and he's a christian already," said Judy ; "a good father in Spain put a name upon him."

After a good deal of similar conversation, for refreshment had restored the good woman's native spirits, we came within sight of Colne, and thought it prudent to discharge our passenger, requesting she would come to the inn, and inform us of our success with the parish officers. "And take care of little Pat," said my friend, "for I have something to give him before we part."

"May the Virgin be your guide," replied she, "and the blessing of the widow and the fatherless go wid you."

Whilst dinner was preparing, the brandy merchant took a round amongst his customers, whilst I explored the town ; and when we returned, we found our fellow traveller waiting at the door. The overseer it seems would not listen to her, and

when she produced the pocket book, he turned her by the shoulders out of his house. "Let us go to the *big wig* at once," said Hatoff. Accordingly we applied to the magistrate, who being a gentleman, and a man of sense and feeling, read poor Judy's papers—recollected her husband—and assured her of his protection. Still my friend was not satisfied. "So the rascal turned you out," said he to the woman, when we retired, "I must have a crack at his *nap*. Where does the scoundrel live?"

This was readily ascertained. A small public house chanced to be opposite, into which we went and despatched a message, requesting the overseer's company to drink a glass of ale. This business was all my friend's planning, and the warmth of his temper, and fondness for amusements a-la-Crib gave me some alarm. But as I threatened to leave him, unless he promised to conduct himself properly, he agreed to my wishes; observing with a laugh, "I only want to christen the rascal."

Mr. Grinder, no bad name for an overseer, instantly obeyed our summons. He was a round faced, pot bellied man, and as he entered, enquired in a hoarse voice, "Who the devil wants me?" Then observing us, he continued, rather more modestly, "Gentlemen, did you send for me?"

"Yes," said Hatoff. "we wish to have the pleasure of your beautiful company for half an hour. Come sit down, and don't look angry. You have perhaps had something to ruffle you this morning. Persons who have a weight of business upon their hands, I know from experience, find enough to disturb their good humour. My service to you, Mr. Grinder."

The fellow appeared not to relish the term *beautiful*, in the beginning of Hatoff's address; but the concluding sentence gave him confidence, and he took his glass, adding, "You say right sir. I have had the weight of this parish upon my shoulders

for ten years, and get nothing but ill will into the bargain."

"What a pity!" said Hatoff, pinching me under the table, and looking as if a sudden thought had darted into his mind. "Come sir," he continued, "I'll pledge you, and then to business. You are doubtless sometimes put about for *sil*."

When I had explained Hatoff's *sil* to mean silver, he replied, "Oh—aye—yes sir—you are right. Much put about indeed. Sometimes can't get change, whatever I would give for it." "Well then, I'll come to the point at once. You must know, I come from Birmingham, and frequently accommodate gentlemen in your line with change to a considerable amount; two per cent. *dis*—you understand me."

"Oh yes—two per cent. discount—fair enough."

"I can accommodate you *now* at that price. But," affecting to lower his tone, "don't you think a few sheet *shils* would answer?"

The man scratched his head, and my friend continued, "they come in low, and the *paups* would jump at them."

"Jump!" repeated Grinder, "Aye, the *hungry scamps* would jump at any thing."

"Well then, what say you? Sixpence a *hog*; are you *up*?"

"Why—a—I should like to have a little talk with you at my own house; because ——"

"Pho, pho, man—we are snug. My friend here's *up*—a *part* in the *biz*—Silverum and Co. *Brum*. Do you never see our paper?"

"Can't say I ever do."

"Well, my friend, I'll put you up to the rig; send you a barrel of *sheeters*—two thousand *shils* for fifty *pow Ab New*. But I say," in an under voice, "how are you for *cops*? Could you do with a barrel of old stagers?" winking his eye.

"Why no—the day's gone by. I once could

have shuffled off a good lump in that way—but penny-pieces stopped us.”

“Well, but I say,” putting his mouth close to his ear, as if afraid of being overheard, “can you do any thing with *screeves*?”

“With what?”

“What! are you not *up* to *screeves*? D—me I thought you was *up* to any thing. Well, I’ll send you the *sheeters* in a fortnight; but remember a down right *Ab New*: none of your sixty days I *prom* to pay—and so on.”

“You’ll find me *jannock*, Mr. Silverum.”

The poor Irish woman who had obeyed orders, was now heard enquiring if Mr. Grinder was there.

“Who wants me?” said he in the loud and boisterous tone, in which he usually addressed the poor. Judy now entered, when he continued, “What, it’s you again, is it? Did not I tell you we would have nothing to do with Irish tramps?”

“But Sir—your honour”—taking out her book, “my husband ——”

“Get out of the house, you strumpet, or I’ll——” He rose with apparent intention to strike the woman, who quickly retreated—when Hatoff dashed the jug of ale in his face, crying “out with her!” then winking at me, he apologised for the error he had committed—abusing the whole race of paupers, for half-starved scamps and scoundrels—and ordered a large glass of brandy, as a salvo for the wetting.

Not foreseeing any further good that was likely to accrue by remaining, I proposed a removal, when Hatoff replied, “Why *Rom*, you must be joking, the *biz* is not half settled yet, my worthy friend and I must not part thus.”

Two or three country people now entered the room, which was just what the little man wanted. The glass of brandy, added to the ale, had in-

spired the overseer, and he began to boast of his iniquities.

“If I had been at home,” said he, “that hussy should not have escaped so. But an hour ago, another poor ragged d—l came for relief; and when I told her to go to her own parish, she began a grumbling, and pretended to teach me my duty; upon which I ran for my horsewhip, and when I came back, she was down on the floor in a make-believe fit. But I was not to be *done* so;—I was *up* to it; and giving her a round dozen, I brought her to herself, and then kicked her out of the house.”

During this recital Hatoff could scarcely contain himself. He clenched his fists and buttoned his coat, as if preparing for an attack—then whispering me, “shall I christen him again?” “By no means,” I replied: though I confess I should like to have seen the wretch punished.

“So then, you flog ’em eh? men and women?” said Hatoff, “and don’t you expect to go to h—ll for this?” Grinder stared. “Don’t you think, I say, that the cooks in the d—l’s kitchen will make your bowels into black *puds* for Satan’s *sup*? whilst your soul is ground to dust in Moloch’s mortar, by the poor *paups* whom you have ground down above stairs here.”

“What do you mean?” said Grinder with much warmth, “I’ll not stay here to be affronted.”

“Indeed but you will, so sit down, and don’t be in a passion, because if you are I shall have a *rattle* at your *nap*. Come fill your glass. Here’s success to the first barrel of sheet shillings I send you.”

This was spoke loud enough for the people opposite to hear, who seemed interested in our discourse. But the alarm instantly visible in the overseer’s countenance being noticed by Hatoff, he continued, “Gads so! I had forgot, here are strangers in the

room. But as I was saying, that poor Irishwoman—she's almost starving—I am sure you'll give her something."

"Me?" replied Grinder, recovering his usual fierceness, "If I do I'll be ——"

"Stop, stop," interrupted Hatoff, "don't swear, but let us talk the business over quietly. You say, you cannot do any thing with bad copper at present—the time, as you observe, is gone by."

"Don't speak so loud," said the Overseer, in an under key, then drawing near, he added, "what shall I give the woman?"

"A pound note."

"A what?"

"A pound note."

"I'll sooner give her my teeth."

"No, don't. Don't give her your teeth, because I shall want a few of them, unless you come down handsomely. But as I was saying—I shall be at home on Saturday, and on Tuesday you will receive the sheet shillings, for half price."

"Hush!" said Grinder, putting a pound note into his hand.

This my friend held up to public view, and winking at me, continued, "aye, aye—you shall have the spectacles the moment I get home, and then you'll be enabled to avoid giving bad money to the poor. Now fill a parting glass. Here's luck to all honest fellows. Come *Rom.* shall we *miz*? Good day, Mr. Grinder; since you are resolved to settle the reckoning, we must indulge you. Here landlord—Mr. Grinder pays," to which he assented with a countenance more like a fiend than a human creature; and we left him to brood over the just chastisement his brutality had received.

"Really, my friend," said I, as we returned to the inn, "you are a most dangerous companion, and I'll forswear your society; for whoever spends a day with you, is sure to be in a row before night."

“*Rom*, thou hast no *knol*,” replied he, looking archly, “Dont you see how finely I get through these things—all kind and friendly. ’Tis true I longed to *mill* the scoundrel; but then, thinks I, the poor *wom* and her *chick* will get nothing by that, so I led him into a *hob* about *sheet* shils. Did not I *do* him neatly?”

When we reached the Inn, Judy was waiting for us. She had made good use of her time, having purchased a decent gown, cloak, and bonnet. Success enlivened her spirits, and nourishment refreshed her complexion; in truth she looked quite another creature, and the pleasant smile of a grateful heart sparkled in her countenance, as she curtsied to us at the door.

“By the mass! I did not know thee, wench,” said Hatoff, “throw off the soldier’s *tog* eh? by the lord Harry I could like to kiss thee; but must not indulge—eh *Rom*? we married men can’t help thinking though—D—n all hypocrites. I say.”

The overseer’s pound note, with what Hatoff and I could afford, amounted to two pounds, ten shillings; which with the note given on the road, put the poor creature in possession of a sum she had probably never been mistress of before; and a flood of tears relieved her overcharged heart. “Go thy way my wench,” said Hatoff, “apply to the big wig again—be careful of the *mopusses*—and those pretty *peeps* will soon get thee another husband.”

The grateful creature departed, invoking the holy virgin, St. Peter, the Pope, and many equally efficacious Saints to shower down blessings upon us; and mounting the *til*, we arrived safe at Burnley.

I performed the following evening to a respectable—though not numerous audience—spent a pleasant hour after my fatigue, with the brandy merchant—ordered Frazier to set off for Rochdale as

soon as it was day light—after breakfast saw my little friend seated in his tilbury, and took leave of him with regret.

“Farewel, my boy Rom,” said he, “when you come to *Liv*, take a *bot* with me at the *But*,” and away he drove, humming his favourite Bravura. I have since frequently met with this worthy eccentric being; and rejoice to say, he lives and laughs, and is most happy, when he can make others so.

It was ten o'clock, when I set off to walk twenty miles over a mountainous country, and the roads so bad, that it was literally wading in mud; and when I entered the town of Haslingden, I found myself so much fatigued, that I ordered dinner at the principal Inn, and determined to proceed no further on foot. Luckily a chaise from Rochdale drove to the door, as I was eating my chop, in which I engaged a seat; and whilst waiting the Postilion's leisure, a mob—for it was the wakes time—collected before the window; in the midst of which, to my mortification and surprise, I observed mounted on a stool, my individual violinist; without his hat—his long hair blowing in all directions—and his fiddle in his hand.

A stranger to his usual mode of obtaining a livelihood, I entertained an idea that he was beginning a new trade—trespassing perhaps upon my department. Impelled by curiosity, I threw up the sash, and screening myself as much as possible from notice, distinctly heard him deliver the following oration. “Well—here I am my lads—never miss a wakes you know—fiddling Dick's true to his time, as the finger to the clock, or a maid to meet her sweetheart. Come—I'll play you a grand new piece of music, composed by Signor Lagramenti Twedlianti—and a great many other hard names—itscalled English Victory, or the Frenchmen's Defeat.” Here he went through the Fall of Paris, and then continued his address. “Now lads—

lads! why not gentlemen? you eat like Princes, and get as drunk as Lords—therefore you are gentlemen.” A shout. “ Well, then, gentlemen. I’ll tell you a true, and most extraordinary story. Now silence—listen—no coughing, blowing of noses, and so forth. In the kingdom of the great Mogul, there dwelt a beauteous damsel. Plump and rosy checked—just like that fat wench in the straw bonnet, nay don’t blush my girl—I don’t blush—if I did you might say its a wonderful thing, as the lad said to the lawyer when he turned honest. So as I was saying—this beautiful damsel that lived in the kingdom of the great Mogul, had many suitors—sweethearts as we call them in Lancashire—but none of them was jannock but one, and he loved her above a bit; the rest were fly winds—fortune hunters—that followed her for her money; just like—a—something or other—but never mind. Now this sweatheart that was jannock, had no money; and the Mufti her father, dipped his porridge in rum, and waded to his fetlocks in gold, and would not hear of his addresses. ‘ Go out,’ said he ‘ thou impudent knight :’—aye, gentlemen, he was a knight, but as poor as a rat;—not like our knights in England, Sir Thomas, and Sir John, rolling about in their carriages, with their hounds, and their whippers-in. So this knight being turned off—I don’t mean at the gallows, gentlemen, mind that—he got into a low way, and looked a little blue; but having a skip-jack to wait upon him—a smartish kind of chap—just like your humble—who could fiddle a little, and sing a little, and joke a little,” “ and lie a little,” cried one of the mob, which caused a loud laugh. “ To be sure,” continued Frazier, not at all disconcerted, “ what matter whether a story be true or not, if it is but a good one. Well—this beautiful damsel, daughter of the mighty Mufti, who dipped his porridge in rum, and waded up to the fetlocks in gold, and lived

in the dominions of the great Mogul, loved the discarded knight—because why—he was jannock, and treated the rest of her followers with contempt. With that, they held a meeting, and laying their swords across each other, so—swore they'd *severate* his head from his body.

“ Here was a black business, as the sweep said to the soot bag. What's to become of the poor knight, gentlemen? Why he'll stand no more chance than a mouse in a mill wheel. And so—he calls to him his skip-jack—or lackey—or what you please, and tells him the whole story. ‘ Thomaso,’ said he, for that was his name, ‘ I must fight all these knights, therefore fetch my long sword and buckler, my helmet and spear, and caparison my courser.’ But this same skip-jack happened to have more brains than his master—which is often the case in your large towns; and as he did not like fighting, he counselled the knight to run away with the lady first, and fight afterwards. The knight looked grave—as knights sometimes do—walked about—put his hand to his forehead, as much as to say, ‘ I'll think a bit.’ At length he gave a start, and said, ‘ Thomaso thou reasonest well—instantly procure me a disguise, and I'll bear her off this night.’ Now here was a fine fellow for you; no shuffling—but off he takes her at once. Is not that the way, lasses? Well, but now you shall hear—now comes the bloo y business—don't interrupt me, or you'll lose a great treat. That very night the beautiful damsel, daughter to the mighty Mufti, who dipped his porridge in rum, and waded to the fetlocks in gold, and lived in the dominions of the great Mogul, left her father's castle, with the valiant knight, and his lackey, from whence they made their way into an adjoining forest. They had not proceeded far, when the flight of the damsel was discovered—the great bell tolled—the bugle horn sounded, and lights, for the night was dark, were

seen in various parts of the castle, so that they had reason to expect an immediate pursuit. This made them quicken their steps, as you will imagine, gentlemen ; but in vain, for horsemen were galloping through every avenue with drawn swords and flambeaux. A pretty situation for a man—as the jailor said to the gibbet—What was to be done, think you ? Sure to be taken, the hounds were at their heels—no escape—and certain to be cut to pieces. Only put yourselves, Gentlemen, in their situation, for a moment. Suppose that good looking young woman—she with the pink handkerchief—to be the beautiful damsel—daughter to the mighty Mofli, who dipped his porridge in rum, and waded to his fetlocks in gold, and lived in the dominions of the great Mogul, and suppose John O'Dicks there, the jannock knight, beloved above a bit ; aye, aye, John, thou may grin, but a pretty girl's not to be sneezed at ; and last, suppose me, your old friend fidling Dick, who have come here at every wakes for the last ten years to make you laugh—suppose me I say, the sly lackey, who could see into a mill stone as far as he that picks it—all in this dark wood and surrounded on every side, like a hare in a horse pond, what should we do, Gentlemen ? Why I'll tell you. ‘ We are dead men, Sir,’ said the lackey. ‘ I know it,’ said the knight ; ‘ but let us sell our lives dearly,’ said his master, drawing his long sword. As I told you before, the lackey did not like fighting, especially when there was nothing to be got by it. ‘ A thought strikes me, Sir,’ said he, ‘ here are plenty of leaves, let us cover the young lady with them, and lay her at the foot of this tree, whilst we climb into the upper branches.’ ‘ Thou art a cunning knave,’ said his master, ‘ and I'll take thy advice.’ Accordingly the lady was covered closely with leaves, and my gentlemen sat aloft upon their perch, like two peacocks in pairing time. There now, we have 'em

all snug in a moment, escaped from certain death, to safety and security. But who have we to thank for all this? Why the lackey, to be sure; his brains saved his master's bacon. And let this be a warning to you, never to turn a deaf ear to good advice. Well, up come the horsemen, with their drawn swords and their flambeaux, hacking and hewing on every side, as if they meant to fell the forest. At length all was quiet; down come the perchers, up jumps madam, and after a good deal of hugging and kissing—eh lasses? away they go in search of their carriage, which was to meet them at the end of the forest. Here at length they arrived, the coach was waiting into which they jumped, and drove away merrily, in spite of the mighty Mufti, who dipped his porridge in rum, and waded to his fetlocks in gold, and lived in the dominions of the great Mogul."

Here there was a general shout, supposing he had finished. "Stop, stop, gentlemen," said he waving his hat, "I have not done; the best is to come. Now, where did they drive to when they left the wood? Why, I'll tell you. They drove to the castle of an acquaintance of the knight's, who lived some miles distant, in whom he thought he could confide; but he was one of your mouth friends, gentlemen, who say one thing and mean another—they have 'em in your large towns by hundreds. So when the carriage stopped at his friend's castle, he received him with open arms, and then despatched intelligence slyly to the mighty Mufti, well knowing he should get pecks of guineas—that is, what *we* call guineas—for discovering his runaway daughter. He was a great rogue you'll say, gentlemen; but mark the end on't, as the parson said. In a few hours the castle was surrounded, and whilst the knight was seated by the beautiful damsel, telling love tales, his treacherous

friend introduced the mighty Mufti and his men, for which the enraged lover clove his head in two at one blow. The Mufti seizing his daughter, lifted his dagger to plunge it in her heart, just so," holding up his fiddle-stick, "when——" here the orator stopped, and throwing his hat amongst the crowd, called out, "There John, take it round, a penny a-piece won't be much amongst you, and every little helps Dick; he must eat as well as the mighty Mufti."

The hat was soon handed back, and as he emptied the contents into his pocket, it appeared well filled. He then continued, "And now, gentlemen, I come to the grand conclusion—and a grand one it is I promise you. You may hear stories in methodist chapels, in law courts, and at stage plays, and in your large towns, they'll swallow it all, as the sow said to the swill tub; but this is true jannock, this is a story of stories, brought from the dominions of the great Mogul; none of your Tristram Shandys and Robinson Crusoes. So, as I was saying, the mighty Mufti, with upstretched arm, just so, was going to stab his daughter, when——she fell lifeless at his feet—dead, to all appearance, as my fiddle. This so alarmed the old gentleman, for it's natural for parents to love their children, you know, as the swine said when she swallowed the sucking pig—he was so alarmed, I say, that he swore by the beard of Mahomet that if she recovered, he would bestow her on the man she liked. This served as a reviving cordial, like a dram at daylight—the jannock knight became her husband—his treacherous friend met his reward—the old man did not live long to plague them—and, when he died, the knight became a mighty Mufti—and made his faithful lackey the companion of his grandeur."

At the conclusion there was a general shout, with "Well done Dick--a song--a song." I listened to the story, with wonder at the fellow's ingenuity and adroitness--but no way anxious for a sample of his musical powers, I stepped into the chaise, and was speedily conveyed to Rochdale.

CHAP. XXXI.

“ABROAD AND AT HOME.”

HOLMAN.

ROCHDALE is not a large town, but stands high in mercantile importance; and is, I believe, the richest place, of its size, in the kingdom: consisting of opulent merchants, who have, by their industry, obtained large fortunes, and live in that degree of elegance and splendour they are justly entitled to.

In the early part of life, I had, as I before said, made some respectable acquaintance in this place, with whom I was then upon a par, in every point of view; but adverse fortune having placed me in a dependent state, I now looked up to that friendship for protection, which, before, I claimed as my due.

My old friend, Mr. Jonathan Fildes, was glad to see me; Mr. Frank Holt, favoured me with his countenance; and many others gave me reason to conclude, I should not repent my journey. The following day, as I sat with Miss Lancashire, my printer, I observed Frazier hurrying into town, at a more than common pace. The boy of the shop called him back, at my request.

“Where are you going in such haste, Mr. Frazier?” said I,

“To my quarters, sir, to prepare for the evening. We perform to-night sir, don’t we?”

“I shall perform.”

“That’s all the same, you know sir. I fiddle—you sing—and, I dare say, we shall get through—as the bellows blower said to the organist.”

“You have got a black eye, Mr. Frazier, and that will do neither yourself nor me credit.”

“My Haslingden friends, sir, always set their mark upon me, lest they should not know me again. But I have something here, sir,” shaking his pocket, “that passeth shew—these,” pointing to his eyes, “but the trappings and suits of wo.”

Having learnt the residence of the worthy magistrate, Mr. Robinson (whom, the reader will recollect, as our companion at Plymouth) I walked to his house, with all those pleasurable sensations that a sanguine mind feels, when anticipating a warm and friendly reception. And, as my performance was advertised for that evening, I should have a plausible excuse for rejecting his pressing solicitations to prolong my stay. I rejoiced to find his health so much established, that he was able to go out on horseback—for I met him returning from his morning’s ride. He held out his hand, and said he was glad to see me, but there appeared a difference in his mode of address, a distance in his manner, I was not prepared for. In short, I discovered, long before I left the hall, that man can be generous and pleasant abroad—and at home, mean, niggardly, and unfeeling. Surrounded by those habits and customs, which, when travelling, he had partially thrown off, he appears in his genuine character. So it was with Mr. Robinson. The good humoured hilarity of the justice in Devonshire, was changed into the morose, serious, self-important magistrate of Lancashire; and a woeful change it was; although it had one unexpected effect—it reinstated Lavater in my good opinion, from which he had been hurled by the du-

plicity of this same member of the quorum. But I have got strangely ahead of my subject.

“Take my horse, Tim,” said the justice. Tim came stumping out of the stable, in a pair of wooden clogs; and, no sooner cast his eyes upon me, than, unmindful of his master’s command, he seized my hand, and almost shook it from my body—“By the mass, Mester Romney, I’m *fain* to see yoo, and so I’m sure is th’ owd mester. Do come in, and bite and sup with us.” “Thou art an impudent rascal,” said his master, “but that Mr. Romney is no stranger to.”

We now entered the house, and Mr. Robinson led the way to a room where preparations were laid for dinner. At sight of the table, I fancied he looked chagrined; but not supposing vexation could arise from any cause, save regret, that the dinner, perhaps, might not be such as he could have wished me, as a stranger, to partake of; I endeavoured to rally his good humour, by talking of Plymouth and Mr. Ponteus. But neither Plymouth, nor the Scotchman, seemed to be remembered with that pleasure I expected. I then fancied some family calamity, though he was not in mourning, might have affected his spirits, and rendered topics uninteresting. Under this idea, I enquired after the children he had formerly mentioned; and learnt, that they were all in health—well married—and settled in distant parts of the country.

Finding myself balked in every attempt to render him sociable, I beguiled the time by examining the prints, with which his room was profusely decorated. At length, he said, somewhat abruptly—“What brings you into Lancashire, Mr. Romney? are you still upon the Itinerant plan?”

Supposing his enquiry proceeded from the friendly interest he took in my concerns, I gave him a brief sketch of my life, since we parted, and end-

ed, by shewing him a bill of my intended performance that evening.

He casually looked it over, then shook his head, and observed, "What a pity you did not attend more to business in your younger days ! But there is no grieving for shed milk ; you have made your bed, and so you must lie upon it."

The little feeling his words expressed, of which his countenance was a faithful copy, gave me the first idea of the change I have, somewhat prematurely, stated above.

This no sooner entered my imagination, than I thought I could account for the dinner being kept back—for Tim had announced its being ready when we entered the house—but as the justice made some excuse to leave the room, I fancied it was to make an addition, on my account, to what was previously prepared.

Under these uncomfortable impressions, I was meditating a retreat, when Tim entered, and, with more than common bluntness, exclaimed, "Dolly says, th' dinner's done to rags, and hoo wonders what yore waiting for."

The magistrate ordered it to be served immediately, and seeing me prepared for a removal, he added, but so disconcerted that he could not look me in the face—"Perhaps, Mr. Romney, you will take a mouthful of dinner ere you go—you have a long walk before you, and it grows late."

"From the Mr. Robinson, I respected in Devonshire, I should not have scrupled to accept a dinner," said I, fixing my eye steadily upon him, "but he, I am sorry to say, is so changed, so different from my fellow traveller, that were the length of the way trebled, and I destitute of the means to purchase refreshment, I would scorn to be indebted to the cold-hearted hospitality, that circumstances have forced you to assume. But I forgive you : liberality is not the school in which

you were educated, custom hath rendered a contrary conduct familiar—and, as you just now elegantly observed, you have made your bed, and so you must lie upon it.”

As I left the house, Tim followed me, to know the reason I went without dinner. As I made an evasive answer, he continued, “I’ll be shot if th’ owd crazy skinflint has ever axed you; nor, I reckon, he’s tane no tickets for th’ *dooment* yore going to have at *Rochda*. He mays nout o’ paying forty or fity pound to a liquor *felly*, but it would grieve his guts to part with a pound or two i’ yore way. I wish I’d his brass, Mr. Romney, I’d mak it fly a different way—but he wants it here,” striking his breast. “Why, it wur but th’ tother day, he sowd th’ owd mare for five pound, that’s carried him to *Rochda* for above twenty year: and now it grieves my heart to see th’ poor *cratur* whipped and flogged up yonder bill, till *hoos* ready to drop. He’ll go to h—ll for it, and so I towd him. Pray sur dun yo ever meet Pontius Pilate i’ your travels? that wur a niceish sort of a chap. He lent our owd mou ten pound, I remember, when he were in a hobble:—but if th’ scales had been turned, he mit a whistled afore he’d a gotten it o’ owd Robinson. But may I mak so bowd—I hope yore na be *fronted*, if I ax yo just to sell me two gallery tickets, like, for yore play to neet.”

“I cannot sell you two Tim,” replied I, as he pulled out his money, “but I’ll give you half a dozen.”

“Win yo, by th’ mass? I’m sure I’m quite obligated—and, if I wur as rich as some folk, yo shud den have a guinea a piece for ’em.”

I performed with tolerable success, thanks to my Rochdale friends; and having received a letter that morning from Manchester which required my immediate attention, I discharged Mr. Frazier with a small present above his demand for the sudden-

ness of our separation. He received it with gratitude, and took leave with regret. "Don't let your noble spirit be cast down, sir," said he, "but when the blue d—ls come across you, as I perceive they sometimes do, never give in, but draw the sword of resolution, and lay about you as I do; go to h—ll says I, or I'll cut you down—as the Bolton cavalry said to the Bull Dog."

I thanked him for his advice, and wanting to be alone, wished him health and success. Still he did not take the hint, but seemed determined, as this was our last interview, to talk his fill. "As to success, sir," said he "I thank you for your wishes, but mine depends upon this," pointing to his head. "Nobody gives Dick a dinner, unless he can do something for it. Fiddlers, sir, are very much neglected for want of proper information; but the auxiliary society of which I am a member.—"

"A member of the Bible society Mr. Frazier?"

"Oh, no sir, the auxiliary fiddling society, established in London, to spread harmonious knowledge in foreign parts. I am going a missionary to Holland, and shall make the lazy broad bottom Dutchmen, skip about to the tune of "Go to the devil and shake yourself."

"You treat serious subjects with too much levity, Mr. Frazier."

"How so, sir? Has not one man as great a right to promote his trade as another? The preachers are filling their pockets, and getting subscriptions without end, for auxiliaries, and missionaries, and Jew conversions, and Sunday schools, and some excuse or another, every day in the week,—ay, and Sunday too. Are not all the walls of every town covered with bills of their performance?—And why may not the society for spreading innocent mirth amongst mankind be encouraged? Well, sir, God bless you:—you are

a gentleman, and know how to demean yourself.— You'll not forget Fiddling Dick, I hope, sir?" At the end of this effusion, he walked consequentially out of the room.

After taking leave of my Rochdale friends, I departed for Manchester, and arrived at the house of my wife's brother, Mr. William Kenworthy, where I found letters, from the cottage, with the pleasing intelligence that all was well.

CHAP. XXXII.

**“THE LONGER THOU LIVEST THE
MORE FOOL THOU ART.”**

W. WAGER.

Now, reader, I come to a part of my life, the most miserable, the most unprofitable, the most contemptible, in point of occupation, that I had ever experienced. Duty demands, that I should say something about it; I will, therefore, recal the despicable and disgusting scenes, from the lowest offices of memory, where I once hoped they might moulder, and rust, and rot, in everlasting oblivion.

“Necessity acquaints a man with strange bed-fellows.” Fate had now prepared a path for me, I never trod before, and, for which, I was, of all human beings, the most unfit. As if my devoted head had not withstood, long enough, the peltings of adverse fortune, a storm was brewing, under the seductive semblance of fair and prosperous weather, that finally put a period to almost every hope—and drove my struggling and sea-worn bark, amongst shoals, rocks, and quick-sands, from which, I fear, it will never recover.

The old theatre in Manchester, had long been converted into a circus, for the use of Mr. Bradbury, of pantomimic memory. It was kept open a year or two, and closed with his total ruin. For some time it remained a dead weight in the hands

of the proprietors,—but as peace was concluded, and a returning trade expected, my friends advised me, as a last effort, to turn my mind towards this infernal place.

Always sanguine and indefatigable, when in pursuit of an object that carried with it probable success, I set to work, and after many meetings with the proprietors, it was at length agreed, that I should be *favoured* with this *good thing*, as one of them observed, at the yearly rent of one hundred and eighty pounds,—and, as some alterations, averaged at forty pounds, were indispensable, they, that is a committee of them, *verbally* agreed to pay one half. For the due payment of the rent, three of my best friends, namely, Mr. Hewett, and Mr. Alstead, solicitors, and my brother-in-law, Mr. W. Kenworthy, became surety.

One day I met a *friend*.—Such a man as Shakespeare means, when he says “he could smile, and smile, and be a villain.” He was a creature from whose conversation and manners, no one would conceive he maintained any degree of importance in the town of Manchester: yet such is the fact, as many know to their sorrow. He thus addressed me. “By G—, *Mester Romney*, this is th’ best thing *yo* ever did i’ *yore loife*. *Yo* are the only *mon* for it. If *yo dunna mak moor* on’t i’ one year, *nor players dun* at th’ new Theatre i’ two, I’ll be d——nd.”

The reader must pardon this, to many, unintelligible digression; but “the galled jade will wince.” It is our duty to forgive injuries, but the *deep, designing malignity* of *unprovoked malice*, though it may be *forgiven* by some, can never be *forgotten* by any.

Before I entered upon this dreadful business I spent a few days at Parkgate; where Mr. Webb the philanthropist was on a visit; partly for the benefit of the waters, but more particularly for

the benefit of the poor ; and the deeds of charity he performed in the neighbourhood called forth the Widow's gratitude, and the Orphan's prayer.

Accidentally procuring from the library the former part of this work ; he sent to know if I could procure him a set. Luckily I had one by me, which on receiving he returned me a polite note inclosing ten pounds, and a request that the remaining volumes might be forwarded to him.

The character of this gentleman is too generally known and appreciated, for me to add any thing to his well earned fame. His reward in this world, is the poor man's blessing, and will be in the next, the approbation of his God.

Flattered and encouraged by well wishing friends—for some I had in the town of Manchester—I eagerly, and with spirit went to work, and procured all descriptions of performers ; for I concluded a liberal spirit in catering for the public entertainment, would soon repay itself.

“ Ah ! that a man might know the end of this day's business ere it come ; but it sufficeth that the day will end, and then the end is known.”

This subject is so hateful to me, and must be so little interesting to my readers, that I shall be pardoned in passing it lightly over. Suffice it then to say, after being six months, involved in saw dust and misery, I wound up my accounts with the loss of *three hundred pounds*.

It is needless to attempt a description of my anguish. Baited on every side by just demands, I had not the power to pay—unable to raise a single guinea for present use—and the knowledge that my sureties were involved—broke my rest by night, and my visions by day terminated in a view of Lancaster Castle.

In this predicament, however, fortune did not forsake me. I still retained a small property in right of my wife. It was supposed to be unalien-

able, but on examining her grandfather's will, it proved otherwise. We readily, by the help of that best of human beings, my friend Hewett, disposed of it for two hundred pounds, and with this money I exonerated my worthy bondsmen.

Still I was indebted to different tradesmen, but having dealt largely with most of them, and paid them as long as I was able, I found favour in their sight.

By the above, it will appear I am still labouring under difficulties. Such is, and I fear, ever will be, the case. I am scarcely free from one calamitous undertaking, before another expedient presents flattering hopes—is attempted—fails—and I am again bowed down with misery and debt. Still I have many things to be thankful for, which the favourites of fortune lack; and if happiness and misery are equally distributed, which I firmly believe—I ought to be grateful; since independence alone is wanting to complete my sum of earthly felicity.

During this six months of confusion, loss, and disappointment, it will naturally be supposed my better half took her share in all that was going forward. Nothing but necessity obliged me ever to be without her; and here she was of real use. Her ready pen, and clear understanding, enabled her to render me substantial service; but vain, as it proved, were all our efforts, and the two hundred pounds that might have helped our declining years, were sacrificed. Not even the twenty pounds for improving the circus, would be allowed, under the excuse that a few of the glass chandeliers were damaged, when forty shillings would have repaired the whole. I must do the proprietors in general the justice to say, that they had nothing to do in the business. Many of them were gentlemen of fortune and respectability, who thought little about so trifling a concern; and those to whom it was

an object, left the chief management to one, whom they knew had d—l enough in him for any thing.

Thus foiled at every point ; almost without the means of present subsistence, and with but faint hopes for the future ; Mrs. R. set out for the *Cottage of Calamity*—the former pleasing appellation having for a while fled, though not for ever, as the following pages will evince.

To add to the unparalleled misery I underwent at this time, two friends, for whom I entertained an affection superior to any thing I ever otherwise experienced, or can conceive it possible for man to feel for man—*died* !

The reader may perhaps recollect, in the early part of these memoirs, a youth with whom I was particularly intimate, during my residence at Chester. He was then a rising star of genius—possessed a feeling heart—and an equanimity of temper that no opposition could disturb. As he increased in years, pleasing anecdote, and instructive information, hung upon his lip. Inoffensive, tender, and humane towards every living creature, he became an object of general admiration—his company was in constant request—and such were his fascinating powers, that the board of festivity never lacked guests if Cowdroy was there.

Without the aid of oaths or indelicacy, he literally “set the table in a roar,” and all competition at defiance, by the neatness of his satire, and the poignancy of his wit.

A forty years’ intimacy with this singularly excellent character, confirmed my admiration, and increased my esteem ; and I appeal to those who best knew him, whether I exaggerate, or set down aught in prejudice. -

His versatility of talent once rendered the Chester Chronicle the best provincial paper in the kingdom. In his later years, he became proprietor of the Manchester Gazette, and in that capacity died.

Oh ye exalted beings! slaves of no party—who know how to estimate worth and talent—give, with me, your meed of praise at Cowdroy's philanthropic shrine!—whose soul lived but in good wishes for mankind, and died, confirming them with his latest breath.

Ye lovers of social delights,
Whose bosoms are mild and humane,
Ah! pause from your perilous rites,
And mark for a moment my strain.
Poor Cowdroy, by nature endowed
With talents to please and illumine,
To nature's dread fiat has bowed,
And silently sunk to the tomb.

There are, who remember his powers,
Ere his nerves by decay were unstrung;
Who remember how night's witching hours
By his fancies were speeded along;
Who remember his eloquent eye,
And those lips where benevolence played;
And these, with true feeling, shall sigh
O'er the turf where their favourite is laid.

I know there are minds who disdain
The verse that extols the obscure;
But if fortunes were measured by brain,
What numbers of these would be poor.
The treasures poor Cowdroy possessed
Were funds of wit, humour, and whim;
And thousands with plums may be blest,
For one that is favoured like him.

As the elephant's trunk can upraise
The trees of the forest or straws;
So Cowdroy could pun on a phrase,
Or could advocate freedom's great cause.
If hate ever rankled his breast,
'Twas against the dark foes of mankind;
And each chain that erodes the oppress,
'Twas the wish of his soul to unbind.

His heart was the seat of the dove;
There gentleness found an abode;
And like the bright day star, his love
For the whole human family glowed.

But that bosom, with feeling once fraught,
 And that tongue the dispenser of mirth,
 And those eyes, ever beaming with thought,
 All, all are descended to earth.

August, 1814.

The foregoing lines came from the powerful pen, and expansive mind, of that great poetic genius, *Edward Rushton*, of *Liverpool*.

It was not many weeks after I had communicated the melancholy intelligence of *Cowdroy's* decease—our mutual friend—to *Rushton*—which brought the tear of sensibility down his manly cheek, and produced this poem, when I read the sad news of the death of this *valuable man*.

My interview with him in the fourth volume will probably be remembered, where I endeavoured to give a slight sketch of his character: but no pen that I am able to use—no words that language can furnish—will convey my ideas of his worth—or draw even a distant resemblance of his genius and virtue.

Unlike my friend *Cowdroy*, he could not “set the table in a roar;” yet—although his great mind was formed for more exalted pursuits—he could join in the social laugh, and heartily enjoy the mirth-moving anecdote.

But when the feast of reason was prepared by intellectual caterers, and served up with the pleasing garnish of rational enjoyment, and unprejudiced opinion, he became a greedy guest—boldly reared his mental crest—and cut up falsehood and hypocrisy with a giant's arm.

His opinions—and he spared no pains to obtain information—were not the generally received dogmas of the multitude. They arose from a spirit of enquiry—were confirmed by deep investigation—and once thoroughly convinced, he became im-

moveable. Tyranny might threaten—interest might invite—yet he shifted not his ground: firm and inflexible, he heeded not the tauntings of ignorance and prejudice, but supported his sentiments with manly decision, because erected—as he conceived, on the foundations of adamantine truth.

There was a stern morality, and conscious independence in every lineament of his countenance, and motion of his body, that appalled the vicious, and awed servility to silence; yet his heart was of the tenderest texture, and as our great bard beautifully observes, he had

“ A tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day to melting charity.”

Being reduced again to my only resource—the Brooms—I procured letters of introduction from Liverpool, to respectable people in the Potteries, Derby, Nottingham, Loughborough, &c. and as I had thrown off the load of *sawdust* that so long weighed me down, the elastic springs of my mind again began to vibrate; though sorely pressed for the last six months, they had not entirely lost their tone.

The reader will naturally suppose that a man so unfortunately situated, was ill provided for a long continuance of *unsuccessful itinerancy*.—and the chances were against me. It was the season of winter—very cold and dreary—and my entertainment had few attractions for the lower orders of society. Nevertheless, my letters were from such respectable quarters, that—having never been that route before—I could not help anticipating success.

My old, and never to be equalled friends, Mrs. Buckley and Mr. Hewett—to whom may be added, a worthy member of the *society of friends*, Mr. John Wood—deserted me not, but supplied my imme-

diate wants ; and I prepared for my excursion with as much hope, and as little fear, as ever I experienced in the early parts of life.

The reader has probably long ere this, thought, with wonder, that a man, not destitute of talent—and I should be ungrateful to God were I to say less—should prefer this uncertain way of life, in which much misery is sure to occur, and at best, little more than a bare livelihood can be obtained. To this I answer ‘I do not prefer it—I never did prefer it ;’ but long experience has taught me, that though I may possess a smattering of genius, it is of such an heterogeneous description—so mixed and complex—that it would puzzle those who know me best, to say what I am most fit for—or rather—it would be more easy for them to say, I am *exactly fit for nothing*. “Why not turn Preacher?” said a worthy friend “it is a thriving trade, and many pulpits would soon be open to you.” I know it ; but having *tried* the Theological compass, East, West, North, and South—I find the different professors have each their strong arguments, and their weak points—that though they all differ, each derives his opinion from the same book—and that every one thinks he alone is right ; for my part, I hope they are all right, though I can scarcely agree with any. Hypocrisy was never one of my besetting sins. Had I chosen either political, or theological deception, as the ground work of my progress through life, I think I may safely say the Itinerant would long since have become stationary, and not now, in his sixtieth year, be wandering through the world in search of a precarious subsistence.

“Have you not friends to procure you a situation under government—a tax-gatherer’s place for instance?” said another “the revenue must be supported, and such offices are necessary.” True, the gallows must be supported, and the office of

hangman is necessary—but if I can possibly avoid it, I'll not accept the place. In short—the doctrine of philosophical necessity appears to be strongly exemplified in my life ; I have long been struggling to get into a different road ; but when I step to the right, or the left, fate shoves me back into the old path ; where I suppose I must continue to jog on as long as I am able to endure the fatigue.

CHAP. XXXIII.

“AS YOU FIND IT.”

EARL OF ORRERY.

BEFORE my departure, business and friendship united, called me to Liverpool; where I dined at a friend's house, with eight or ten strangers from the New World. One of them, Captain Jackson, from having read an American edition of the *Itinerant*, made an offer to take me to his country—to insure me profits from my public exertions, greater than my most sanguine imagination could expect—and return me to England, free of all expense. But liberal and flattering as the proposal was, my time of life obliged me to decline it. The captain's kindness and generosity, however, live in my memory, and gratitude will always lead me to speak of it as it deserves.

From Liverpool, two of the gentlemen with whom I dined, Mr. Henshaw and Mr. Goddard, considerable merchants, accompanied me to Burslem, whither they were going to purchase Staffordshire ware. This I considered a material addition to my letters of introduction; and indeed they did all they could to forward my plans.

The first evening I arrived at this human beehive—where *animated* clay gives various beautiful, useful, and lively forms to the same *inanimate* substance—my worthy companions introduced me to the tea table of a principal manufacturer. The fa-

mily was numerous, mostly females, and the old couple, indeed all of them, treated me with that respect my introduction demanded, until my profession, and intention to exhibit at Burslem were mentioned. And then, though a visible alteration took place, I was still weak enough to suppose, that this first step into so numerous and respectable a family, would insure me, from the American influence, not only their personal attendance, but their interest amongst their acquaintance.

During the evening, as the young folks were musical, I was requested to sing, and felt a pleasure in being able to contribute to the general amusement. But great was my mortification to find my songs fail in their usual effect. They were all of a comic nature, of my own composition, and calculated to create innocent mirth; but not a muscle moved, and it appeared to me that the hundredth psalm would have suited the sombre visages of my auditors better than any thing I could produce. In this I was right. My friends informed me, as we returned to the inn, that the family were Methodists.

Still I conceived, as my performance was not a play, that I might be favoured with their countenance; and to secure this, I sent them the Itinerant to read, in hopes that, finding the author had on many accounts some claims to public attention, they might be interested in his favour.

The following day Messrs. Henshall and Goddard were invited to dinner, without any notice being taken of me, and brought back my volumes, with which the ladies were pleased to say they had been highly entertained; but that was all. The two young gentlemen came to my room, but no interest in my behalf was exerted by the rest of the family. I mention this circumstance to prove what I have long been convinced of—that when bigotry and superstition enter the doors of a dwelling, feel-

ing and liberality are sure to fly out of the windows.

Had I been informed that this worthy family considered themselves as forming a part of the *chosen few*, I should not have introduced myself into their holy company. And yet the Americans were sinful—disbelieving their pious creed altogether—but they had *money to lay out*; and 'tis marvellous what a film the mammon of unrighteousness will cast over the eyes of the elect. These worthy gentlemen, however, made ample amends, by their hospitality and kindness, for the neglect of others. And as this work will circulate across the Atlantic, I here tender them all the return a poor man is capable of, namely, grateful, but unavailing thanks.

The bar of the inn at which we sojourned, was an evening resort for many of the respectable inhabitants of Burslem, who are all some way or other engaged in the earthenware manufactory; and I was agreeably surprised to find a society of spirited, lively beings, who having heard of, or seen me at other places, paid me much respect, and expressed a wish to forward my views to the utmost of their power. Ten or a dozen of them ordered sets of the work I am now writing, and were in other respects kind and attentive. I was three weeks in the Potteries, but met with no society equal to that at Burslem.

An old and highly respected friend, formerly a good actor, had long been comfortably settled, with his excellent wife, near this place. Mr. and Mrs. Craneson, esteemed by all who know them, may be classed under the head of good souls; for being happy themselves, they feel a warm interest in the happiness of others; willing to assist to the utmost of their power, all who stand in need of it, either by personal exertions, friendly advice, or hospitable accommodation. These worthy people, as soon as they heard of my arrival, sent me a pressing in-

itation to dinner, which I instantly accepted ; and from that moment until my departure, they were indefatigable in their efforts for my service, and never ceasing in every hospitable act that friendship could devise. May their kindness be repaid tenfold in health and happiness !

My letters to Hanley were few ; through the medium of one, however, I obtained the use of the Town-hall, a long, dreary, cold place, and the snow was knee deep.

From my ill success at Burslem, my finances were reduced to ten solitary shillings. My trans-Atlantic friends were gone on business through the country ; indeed, had they remained, no embarrassment could have forced me to apply to them for pecuniary aid. My apparatus being fixed, I prepared for Monday evening with a heavy heart ; but there was no choice, and many a sigh was sent to the cottage of calamity—for, alas ! that was all I *could* send. Determined, however, to rouse myself from useless despondence, I left reflection, and the lonely fireside of my lodging, for the more convivial society that I understood frequented the principal inn ; for bad as my prospect was, I well knew the only way to mend it was to become acquainted with the inhabitants.

At the inn I found a collection of respectable persons, many of whom drank my health, and success to my undertaking. Amid the group was a plain looking person, of mean appearance, though, as I afterwards learnt, the richest man in the place. He had taken his grog, and was at those times guilty of eccentricities truly ridiculous. This he soon exemplified. Some altercation having arisen, and his conduct blamed by the company, he made the *amende honorable* in his usual way ; not by begging pardon, shaking hands, or confessing his error, but in a manner that appeared to me truly singular. Having missed him from his seat, I enquired

where he was gone; when I was desired, in a whisper, to say nothing till he had taken his round; and casting my eye to the further end of the room, I observed him creeping on his hands and knees by the wall, stopping every now and then, and putting up the former in a supplicating manner, to the great entertainment of the company; and this was continued until he again reached his chair, when he was restored to favour and forgiveness.

“That a rich man should creep,” thought I.—“But he is not the only example. How many creep into favour and profit, by crawling up the sleeve of a minister! How many creep into the good graces of a beautiful, unsuspecting female, by lies and dissimulation! How many *poets laureat* have crept into place, by *servilely prostituting* their *former principles*! In fact, the creeping system is more predominant than at a first view we are aware of; but trace the candidates for fame or profit, and nine times out of ten we shall find that the upright man has no chance with the creeper.”

Perhaps the best mode of description I can adopt, will be to transcribe a letter I at this time sent to a worthy friend in Liverpool. It was written from the impulse of the moment, and fully describes my then state of mind.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“Will Providence never cease persecuting me? Is my devoted head never to be freed from the peltings of misfortune? In my disastrous life, I have made many disastrous excursions, but none that I recollect equal to this. My friend Crooke, with the best intention, recommended me to the Potteries: would it had been any where else! I have waded through misery and mud for three weeks. to exhibit three times, for little more than two pounds

per night—some obstacle continually presenting itself—as if fate stood over me with a drawn sword, ready to cut the thread of dawning hope whenever it presented itself. I'll describe my attempt at this place, by way of sample. Having with much trouble obtained the Town-hall, I delivered my letters of introduction, took lodgings, fixed up my apparatus, procured fiddlers, circulated my bills, &c. &c. and sat down fatigued, but not without hope. As I was taking breakfast the following morning, my window facing the Town-hall, all sense of appetite immediately fled, by the appearance of Polito's immense procession of caravans, in a few minutes arranged close to my intended scene of action; and the roaring animals soon proclaimed a defeat to all my expectations.

“My finances were reduced to five shillings, and the hopes of pecuniary aid being thus demolished, created feelings of a most unpleasant nature. I have long been used to buffet with obstacles arising from *human* opposition:—that is natural;—for Hobbs says, ‘the world is in a continual state of warfare;’—but the *brute* creation, if they had known their *duty*, should have behaved *better*; for I am, and always was, one of their best friends.

“At night I kicked my heels in the cold regions of the Town-hall, without much expectation. ‘Here is room,’ thought I, ‘to meditate e’en to madness.’ At length a few people dropped in; but what power of lungs could contend against the roaring of lions, the squeaking of jackals, and the rumbling of double drums, not to mention the shouting of the swinish multitude: in a word, I returned the money to the few who came, and struck my colours to the all-victorious Polito.

“A philosopher like you would perhaps have smiled at seeing me seated in my lodging, disconsolate and wo-begone. But my philosophy, if ever I had any, forsook me; and I do not blush to con-

less shedding a tear, not on my own account, but for the cottagers at Parkgate.

“ My performance being postponed, I entertained hopes that the following evening would make me amends. ‘ Vain hope,’ thought I, when at three o’clock one of those facetious gentlemen, called a mountebank, erected his stage on the site lately occupied by the beasts ; and Mr. Merryman displayed his eloquence on the virtues of a dead sheep, exhibited as a prize, to which the baptised brutes assembled by hundreds, and threw up their shillings.

“ ‘ It is a long lane that hath no turning,’ said I. ‘ This fellow must depart when the sun sets.’ These reflections encouraged me, and having prepared for my arduous task, about thirty auditors came, and I was thankful even for this trifle, since a gentleman informed me that a ball that evening would prevent many people from attending.

“ In short, there is no end of my ill luck, and I am sick of the disgusting subject.

“ You, my good friend, seated in a comfortable and profitable business, can have no idea of what I feel. Even when successful, ’tis a most arduous undertaking for an individual to keep alive the attention of an audience for two hours ; but here success sweetens labour. On the contrary, when every thing runs retrograde, and still the necessity exists to go through the performance with spirit, though to a certain loss ; I say, to paint the feelings in a case like this, is utterly impossible.

“ I shall leave this horrid hole in the morning, and hope Derby will make amends for the misery of the Potteries. Give my best regards to every body, and believe me,

“ Dear Sir,

“ Your obliged friend and servant,

“ SAM. WM. ROMNEY:

“ *Hanley, Wednesday.*”

It has been my rule throughout this work, to express my gratitude in the best terms I am able, to those whose warm hearts have held out the hand of consolation to me in time of trouble. According to this plan, I must not forget my obligations to Mr. Jesse Shirley, a gentleman residing near Hanley, who did me a kindness in a way that could not wound the most delicate feelings; and to my private thanks, I now add my public acknowledgments.

Although I was unsuccessful at Hanley, it does not follow that the inhabitants lacked discernment or liberality; rather let me suppose that my mode of entertainment suited not the taste of the Hanleyans; for the menagerie and the mountebank were well attended; and could I have indulged their propensity for natural history, or gratified their taste for the gymnasia, by turning a somerset, or dancing the rope, there is no doubt I should have met with due encouragement.

From Hanley I intended to perform a night at Stoke; but finding from report that the Town-hall was not to be had without application to a purse-proud man, difficult of access, and inflated with his own fancied superiority, I chose to proceed to a respectable town twelve miles further. Here I was an entire stranger. The people had not even read the Itinerant. So that my success depended solely on chance, and the effect of one introductory letter.

Having agreed for the room, &c. without the disagreeable and disgusting necessity of cap-in-hand application, I prepared to wait upon the person to whom my credentials were addressed. He proved to be a gentleman of considerable fortune, and still more considerable singularity. I was informed he seldom spoke to the individuals of his own family—to the females never—having taken an unaccountable aversion to his wife, and in fact to all of woman kind. All his communications were epis-

tolary ; and if by chance a stranger called, his person was examined through a small window placed in the wainscot ; and according to the impression made by so casual a view, he conducted himself.

He generally wore a velvet cap ; but this, on the approach of any one he chose to admit, was exchanged for a wig, of which he had three different kinds, suitable to the fancied rank of his visitors.

After walking about a mile to the house of this oddity, I delivered my letter to a servant, who civilly desired me to walk into the hall. As he opened the door of an apartment on my right hand, I heard a voice exclaim, “ Thomas, bring down my *first wig*.”

This I conceived a lucky omen, since it plainly indicated that I had been seen and was approved. But in the space of a minute he recalled his order, and I heard him say, “ the *third wig*, Thomas, will do.”

“ So,” thinks I, “ he has read the letter, and my profession has lessened me in his esteem.”

“ My master desires you will walk this way, sir,” said the servant returning ; and as he threw open the door, I beheld a little man in a brown wig, who rose when I entered.

“ Sit down, sir,” said he ; and then continued talking with such volubility, that it appeared as if, from seldom speaking, he was become so full of words, that the first person he addressed was sure to be overwhelmed.

“ I have received a letter, sir,” continued he, “ from my worthy friend Mr. — of Liverpool. He recommends you to my attention in very warm terms—says you are author of the *Itinerant*—a pleasant book—made me both laugh and cry—but what can I do ? My friend knows I never go out beyond the park—hold no verbal communication with any one—then—pize on it—what can I do to

serve you ? I have left the world, sir—left it these ten years—and the women—they are nothing but plagues—pray are you married ? For my part, I'd as soon meet a mad bull, or a lion, or a tiger ;—they are grand deceivers—mothers of all mischief.

‘ Woman to man was first a blessing given,
When love and innocence were in their prime :
Happy a while in paradise they lay,
But quickly woman needs must go astray.’

That's in a play you know, sir—the Unhappy Marriage ;—all marriages are unhappy ; so let us say no more about them. Have you a prospectus of your performance about you ?” Reading a negative in my looks, I suppose—for he would not give me time to answer—he continued—“ Well, well—never mind—send me one, and I'll do the best I can to serve you. Pize on it ! I took you for our new curate—were you never in the church ?”

I was preparing to answer, when he proceeded—“ Well, well—no matter. Lecturing one way—or lecturing another—it's all the same thing—done for a livelihood :—no penny, no preacher—no money, no lecturer ;—isn't it so, sir ?” I smiled. He then rose : “ Good day to you, sir. I thank you for the few minutes conversation you have favoured me with. I seldom see company—but I like your appearance, and approve your sentiments ;—so let me have your prospectus, and I'll endeavour to serve you.”

I was again on the point of speaking, when he opened the door, and added, “ Not a word, sir—don't say a word. Pize on it ! We must do all the good we can, you know—I think it my duty to be *amicus humani generis*.” He then bowed—shut the door—and rang the bell, which brought a servant, and I soon found myself on the high road.

When I began to reflect on the strange scene I had witnessed, I could scarcely persuade myself I had not been in a dream. After listening to the unceasing volubility of this man of many words, without being allowed one in return—I was thanked for a conversation that never passed, and sentiments I was not allowed to express. “Surely,” thinks I, “this is taking too much for granted—this is carrying the Lavaterian system to an excess. I, who all my life have perhaps laid more stress upon outward appearances than experience warrants, never pretended to judge of a man’s precise sentiments by his looks. But this gentleman goes further. He fancies a conversation that never took place. Is he deranged or a genius? For genius is always eccentric. Aye; but genius is seldom wealthy. He must then be a sort of spoiled child, whose fortune having enabled him to indulge his whims and odd fancies, acts a strange and excursive part in these scenes of life; whereas, had he been poor, he might have lived and died a rational member of society.”

A woman hater is in my opinion a non-descript. Many a man has gone mad for love of the sex; but insanity arising from a contrary cause, is, I conceive, impossible.

My reflections had rivetted me to the spot, and I stood gazing on the mansion of this unaccountable being, when I was accosted by my landlord, who had given me an insight into his character.

“Well, sir,” said he, “no admission I suppose.” But when I related the foregoing scene, he lifted up his hands in wonder, and said, I was the luckiest being that had been within his walls for many years. “He must have been struck,” added he, “with your appearance, and his calling for the first wig is a proof of it. You are astonished at his dislike of women, and will be more so when I in-

form you, that he has been long married to a lovely creature—has a beautiful family, who all reside in the same house; yet he never sees them. Nay, so little acquaintance has he with those who ought to be dear to him, that it was only the other day, in one of his solitary walks, where no one intrudes on pain of his displeasure, he met on the sudden a fine boy, who had trespassed on this forbidden ground in search of bird's nests. Instantly seizing the affrighted youth, he exclaimed, 'Who are you, you young rascal, that dare interrupt my solitude? who are you, I say?'

"The boy was silent, although an arch smile played on his countenance, that seemed to say, 'You ought to know me.' This still more enraged the Squire, who, giving him a good shake, added, 'Your saucy looks, I suppose, are meant to insult me; but your father shall feel the effects of my displeasure.'

"The youth looking up in his face, replied, 'You'll not punish yourself, sir, will you?'

"'Me! what mean you? where do you live?' He pointed to the Hall. 'And what's your name?' 'The same as your's, sir.'

"Being now convinced he was menacing his own son, he let him go, exclaiming, 'get home this instant, and never let me see you more.'

"In the former years of his marriage, jealousy the most unfounded formed a strong feature in his character. His wife was never suffered to quit his sight. Nay, to such a length was this carried, that when the shoemaker took her measure, they were in separate apartments, the lady projecting her foot through a hole made on purpose in the wainscot. Yet notwithstanding these strange singularities, he does abundance of good. Though there is no gaining access, the poor know how to address him. They get their case drawn up, and hang it upon a

bough in the walk he generally takes. This, by humouring his foible, pleases him ; and he sends an old man, the only being in whom he puts confidence, to learn the truth of the story, which if satisfactory, he liberally relieves."

This discourse brought us to the inn, and my first business was to inclose a few bills to the Squire.

On the evening of my performance, I was agreeably suprised by the appearance of fifty boys from a neighbouring seminary, who I afterwards understood were treated by the eccentric owner of the Hall. This was a kindness that demanded my gratitude, and I argued within myself whether it was not a duty incumbent upon me to return him my personal thanks.

This intention was combated by the uncertainty of gaining access ; and supposing I was so fortunate, what good could arise so long as I was not permitted to speak ? I therefore testified my sense of his politeness by a note, and left the place with the mercury in the mind's barometer some degrees above fair weather.

What a difference a small swell in a man's pocket makes in his disposition ! To some it gives pride and self-importance ; others it robs of memory, so that they forget their most intimate friends ; even the visual organs are affected by it, and a film is thrown over the sight, that renders it difficult to discern those who are inferior in point of property. Upon me, I confess, it has a most exhilarating effect. Whether its baneful or beneficial influence is most generally extensive, I am not quite decided ; but I fear the former.

" 'Tis a pity !" said I aloud, as the coachman drove towards Derby, without reflecting that there were other passengers. "It is indeed a pity !" repeated I with much energy.

"True, sir," replied a young lady who sat oppo-

site, at the same time throwing some half-pence into a poor mendicant's hat. "It is indeed a pity to pass by one's starving fellow creatures, who lack the commonest necessities of life, whilst we are lolling at our ease in a coach and four."

This address was matter of surprise; for my mind was so filled with the subject on which it was reflecting, that I was not aware of giving loud vent to my emotions. It was likewise a matter of reproach for having, as the lady conceived, bestowed nothing but pity on a distressed object, whom I saw not till too late to relieve. I was of course criminated in her opinion, and felt myself bound in justice to clear her misapprehension.

"Is it not possible, madam," said I, "for the mind to be so folded within itself, that outward objects become imperceptible?"

"I can conceive it possible," replied the lady.

"And yet you are perhaps the greatest obstacle to this position."

The lady smiled.

"But as you have admitted such a thing to be possible," continued I, "permit me to say, hardened as it may appear in your presence, that such was my state of mind. But I again repeat the words, for it is a pity that I should innocently have provoked a rebuke from one whose fair form, and feeling heart, must lead every man to set a high value on her esteem."

"I understand you, sir. You have committed a fault, and would flatter me into an opinion of your innocence."

An old gentleman who sat by her side, and proved to be her father, chuckled at this reply, and observed, "Well done my girl! You had better not enter the lists, sir, for Charlotte's a match for any body."

"That I deny, sir. The young lady is a match

for a prince, could one be found good and virtuous enough to match with her ; but not for any body."

The lady smiled again. " You are a skilful warrior, sir," said she ; " for when the enemy is not to be overcome by open attack, you have recourse to stratagem."

" Madam, when a veteran has to engage with an all-conquering enemy, flushed with success ; whose every feature announces victory, and whose eye, like the basilisk, kills with a look, it is dangerous to meet such unequal odds in the open field, and stratagem becomes necessary."

" Well said," replied the father, with a smile of approbation. " The gentleman fights in a courtly style, Charlotte ; what have you to say now ?"

" Why, sir, I say there is more reason to compliment his politeness than his prowess ; or, in other words, that there appears more of the gentleman than the general in this war of words."

" Madam, I thank you ; for I would rather hold that place in your opinion. The general has his use, I am willing to allow ; but the real gentleman heals every breach without inflicting a wound."

" Aye, aye—that's my opinion," said the father. " I don't like these human butchers, who live by massacre. Give me your fireside warriors, who spring a mine with a whiff of tobacco, and inundate armies with a glass of ale."

" My dear father," replied the lady with a look of pleasantry, " if all the world were of your opinion, 'tis true we should have no bloodshed, and our smoaking and drinking armies would increase rapidly, without beating up for recruits ; but in that case, what would become of the younger branches of nobility ? The churches and the offices of state would be insufficient for the numerous band who seek provision from the public."

“True, madam,” replied I. “But do away with the law of primogeniture, and these noble paupers would have a maintenance adequate to their wants, without being a burden upon the industry of the poor.”

“True, sir, you are right,” said the old gentleman. “’Tis a c—sed law, and ought to be repealed. But there are some ridiculous fools of my acquaintance, with whom the law has nothing to do, who make a point, of course, that their eldest son shall be a gentleman—I mean as far as money can make him one—whatever becomes of the rest : but I am sure no honest man would be guilty of such conduct. Who could die with a clear conscience that leaves his property to one child, and quarters the rest of his family on the people? Now, sir, I have one girl besides this impudent slut, and one boy ; and my will runs thus : so many thousand pounds, to be equally divided betwixt two saucy wenches, and one overgrown, impudent lad.”

At the conclusion of this speech, the glistening tear stood in the brilliant eye of his daughter, whilst I seized his hand, and congratulated him on sentiments that did him so much honour, and wished the generality of the world would act in the same manner.

“I wish they would, sir,” replied he. “I venerate no distinction but what arises from talent, industry, or virtue—mortally hate tyranny of all descriptions, whether public or domestic—and though I have some interest in my neighbourhood, it shall never be exerted in favour of a *court prostitute*. I am a little singular, sir, but I believe not the worse thought of in the town where I live.”

“Then I am sure you do not reside in Manchester, sir.”

“No, sir.”

“Nor in Liverpool.”

“Derby is our residence,” said the lady.

“And are these opinions singular in Derby, madam?”

“Why really, sir, I hardly know how to answer you. General information and a spirit of enquiry prevails in our town; and as most people choose to think for themselves, allowing the same privilege to others, it's odds but there's a great diversity of opinion. I am happy to say, however, that we can agree to differ.”

“Aye, sir,” continued the father, “a difference of opinion is entertained on many subjects, without violence in any. A man is not esteemed an enemy to his country, who thinks he is consulting her best interests by opposing the extravagant and besotted conduct of ministers; nor do political adversaries descend to vulgar abuse, so illiberally bestowed by the powerful party in some parts of Lancashire. In fact, sir, we are fifty years before them in point of civilisation. Drunkenness and dissipation are with us less encouraged than in many towns of the same magnitude, owing to the precepts and example of that great man the late Doctor Darwin. In short, a vein of rational information, temperance, and moderation pervades Derby;—the barriers of the human understanding are not beaten down by the club of tyranny, nor the minds of the multitude misled by the furor of republicanism.”

“Happy equilibrium!” cried I. “Would every part of the kingdom were equally blessed?”

The coach now stopped at the new inn—the old gentleman welcomed me to his native town—and as we parted, added, “If at any time it suits your arrangements, I shall be happy to see you at my house.” His lovely daughter seconded the invitation by a graceful motion of her head, and an angelic smile, that carried with it more influence than—than I can express.

“They are gone,” said I, as my eye followed them down the street : “ what a vacancy—what an awful calm succeeds the last two hours salubrious breeze ! But such is the lot of life :—it is a wise law of nature ;—and now the bitter comes, to render the sweets more valuable. If mankind were alike delightful, goodness would be too cheap, and ’tis only by contrast we learn to estimate its value.”

CHAP. XXXIV.

“IF IT BE NOT GOOD, THE DEVIL’S
IN IT.”

THOMAS DEKKER.

IT is said that “idleness is the root of all evil.” If, on the contrary, industry be the tree of general good, I ought to reap some fruit ; for I rest not on my oars, nor does the grass grow under my feet. “Yet to what purpose is all this bustle—this running from place to place?”—thought I, on finding the contents of my purse did not exceed a ragged paper, on which appeared, in scarcely legible characters, “*One pound !*” In a strange place—near an hundred miles from home—no little woman to counsel and console me. “However, it’s well it’s no worse,” said I, returning the ragged emblem of national poverty into my pocket. “The inmates of my cottage enjoy health, and some degree of comfort :—so do I ;—and many a bright star in the hemisphere of genius, possessing talents I have no claim to, languishes in misery and distress.”

Thus comparing the trifling ills I had to encounter with the heavy calamities that an innumerable quantity of my fellow creatures, more deserving than myself, were afflicted with, I became courageous—arrayed myself in my best costume—well knowing the effect of first impressions—and with as much independence of mind as any man, sallied forth with my first letter of introduction.

It was addressed to a gentleman named S—v—r, one, I was informed, of the first chemists of the age—a man of strong mind, and cultivated genius.

It is natural to form an opinion of a person's appearance from his character and pursuits. From what I had heard of this philosopher, fears arose that I should cut but a poor figure in his company; and busy imagination painted him at least six feet high, with a large white wig, and suitable gravity and distance of deportment; in short, another Doctor Johnson.

A man of a reflecting mind is never at a loss for unpleasant anticipation. Having, from experience, reason to form but a poor opinion of human nature, he too often looks on the dark side of things, and draws portraits that exist no where but in his own heated imagination.

So it was in the present instance. Mr. S—v—r was opposite to every thing I had imagined; for when I knocked at the door, and expected to meet the austere, sedate, self-opinionated philosopher of six feet, with a large wig, I was introduced to a little man, with black hair, and of a pale complexion. Free, easy, and unassuming—pleasant, cheerful, and conciliating—with nothing of the pedant about him, but quite as willing to receive information as he was capable of bestowing it.

He was in his laboratory, writing an article on the subject of gunpowder for an *Encyclopædia*, and begged my permission to proceed in an experiment he was making on that inflammable composition. For this purpose he anxiously watched the process of something contained in a small crucible, occasionally tasting or smelling, to ascertain the changes that took place, and conversing with me at intervals in the most pleasant manner.

We were descanting upon the eccentricities of some of our Liverpool friends, when, taking his

apparatus off the fire, and holding it near his nose, it exploded with a loud report, smashed the crucible, upset the philosopher, and drove me, much alarmed, into a corner of the room. As no serious consequences resulted, the scene must have been truly laughable to a bystander. However, matters were soon restored to order.

The chemist, rubbing his nose, a little singed by the experiment, smiled, and taking up his pen, in an exulting manner exclaimed, "This is a fortunate occurrence. I am now convinced of what I always suspected." He then wrote a few words by way of memorandum, and ordered a fresh crucible. "Another experiment," continued he, "will confirm my opinion."

Now, though the first had not entirely convinced the philosopher, it had fully satisfied me, and fixed my determination not to wait for another. So wishing him a good night, I retired, with a promise to dine with him on the following day, at the same time conceiving it very probable that the house might be blown up that very night.

"My first introduction has met with a *warm* reception," thought I, as I walked to the New Inn. "Enquiries into the properties of matter are attended with some danger; and if yonder little chemist pays thus dearly for all his information, though I may admire his courage and perseverance, I do not envy his achievements and celebrity."

Having fixed myself comfortably at a private house, I sat down to report progress, and sent a faithful account to Parkgate of all that had passed. But the sum total was a *void*, which I flattered myself a day or two would enable me to fill up with *numbers*; nor was I deceived.

At the time appointed I waited on my philosophical friend, and was glad to find his house in the state I left it. I had postponed my arrival to the last moment, lest I might interrupt some other che-

mical process, and arrived just as the family were sitting down to a plain, but excellent dinner; and the evident sincerity with which I was welcomed by Mr. S—v—r and his good and amiable wife, convinced me that philanthropy as well as philosophy formed a part of his studies.

My overnight's alarm not having entirely subsided, I cast my eyes around, to see if any other experiment was in preparation. No symptom, however, appeared, and I prepared to make a *natural* experiment upon a fine fillet of veal, when a report in my rear—not quite so loud as that produced from the crucible—arrested my progress, arising, I conceived, from some other combustible concoction, which had peradventure burst its limits before it was expected. Seeing my surprise, my worthy host, smiling, said, “Don’t be alarmed, Mr. Romney. The evaporation of fixed air from a porter bottle on the sideboard, causes *this explosion*.”

Drinking was not one of my evil propensities; and, as was before observed, the habit was not prevalent in Derby. I therefore found no difficulty in avoiding what common politeness leads every man to promote at his own table; and in lieu of the bottle, Mr. S—— proposed introducing me to the circle of his friends.

For this purpose I accompanied him to several respectable families, whose politeness and good breeding led them to treat me with kindness and hospitality, out of respect to the gentleman by whom I was introduced. Indeed the contrast was so palpable, when opposed to the conduct of the greatest part of the people I had been amongst for the last three weeks, that I fancied myself, as it were, in a new world. It was not alone the favours bestowed, but the *manner* of bestowing—appearing to place the obligation on the giver rather than the receiver.

Happy people ! long may the inhabitants of this enlightened town enjoy their intellectual sovereignty, their moderation, and social harmony.

It was about the hour of tea amongst the *polite* inhabitants of our happy country, when S—— knocked at the door of a respectable house ; and his name being announced, we were shewn into an elegant drawing room. But guess my astonishment and pleasure, on being introduced to my fellow travellers, the old gentleman and his spirited daughter, with whom, the day before, I passed a couple of hours so pleasantly ; and were I to say a similar feeling influenced their minds, I am supported by the warm and cordial reception given by both. Another daughter, his son, and a respectable looking lady, their mother, formed the fireside group ; and I joined the tea table in a state of mind bordering on felicity.

I have observed in my experience through life, that the education given to girls, and in some cases to boys also, is often lavish, and more ostentatious than useful. Master Jackey, the son of Mr. Somebody—a tailor perhaps—must go to the grammar school, because it is genteel, and at fourteen years old has finished his Latin, and made some progress in Greek ; whilst it is about twenty to one, he cannot read a paragraph in the newspaper in his native tongue, or cast up a sum in the first rule of arithmetic, without blunders. Miss, too, has abundance of money spent, and time lost, in teaching her to work worsted sheep, and silken shepherdesses ; and this, in the end, is of less service to her than a game at shuttlecock, or a round at skipping rope. Painting, French, and music are all paid for ; and at the age of twenty she can scarcely copy a red rose—hears people speak French, without understanding a word that is said—and place an easy country dance before her, she begs to be excused, having never seen it before.

This arises from silly, weak parents fancying their offspring capable of learning every thing, however arduous, or contrary to the bias of their minds; and having paid more money for their education than would have comfortably settled them in life, conceive they have done their duty. Whereas, were they to confine their children's pursuits within the limits of their capacity, and whilst they pay for precept, keep an eye themselves on their practice, we should oftener meet with those accomplishments, which render young women a delight and credit to their parents, and an ornament to society.

I am led into these reflections by witnessing the accomplishments of the young ladies with whom I had the honour of being acquainted in Derby. Amongst females of a certain class, there was nothing superficial—nothing attempted that was not excellent in its kind. From which I conclude that genius was consulted prior to a final determination respecting their attainments; and that no accomplishment was endeavoured to be planted in a soil that did not promise an ultimate harvest.

After tea, the old gentleman requested his daughter to give us a little music. It is to me a disgusting thing, in general, to be obliged to listen to the blundering efforts of a girl, who with difficulty stammers through "The Battle of Prague," after practising it five or six years, and to be under the necessity of praising what deserves censure. But this young lady's musical talents kept pace with her other attainments, and my attention was rivetted by the rapidity and taste with which she executed several difficult pieces.

When she finished, I was at a loss for words to express my admiration. The usual terms of "delightful"—"charming"—"very well indeed," which are always expected to follow the ear-torturing attempts of spoiled children, would ill express those

sensations of pleasure and surprise, that a performance like Miss —— was calculated to produce on a mind gifted with some taste, and a smattering of science.

Turning my eyes towards the old gentleman, I observed a smile on his countenance, as much as to say, “what do you think of that?” And could I have found words expressive of my sentiments, without running into the extravagance of adulation, I would have informed him; but that was impossible; and conceiving that he had formed an idea from appearances of my admiration, I simply observed, “what shall I say, sir?”

“Why,” replied he, “say the truth—that she’s a clever girl.”

“That would ill express my feelings, my dear sir. However, it must suffice; for I despise even the appearance of flattery, and would rather create a suspicion of my lack of taste and knowledge, than of my sincerity.”

This delightful family were well calculated to make time pass pleasantly; for the other young lady played and sung with taste, and the mother, with sprightly and lady-like affability, rendered pleasure doubly pleasing, by the most minute attention to the comfort of her guests.

At a late hour we literally tore ourselves from these amiable people. My friend the philosopher returned to his house to meditate on fresh experiments, whilst I sought my pillow, and dreamt of concerts, beautiful women, and gunpowder.

In the morning my feelings were flat and uncomfortable. To a man whose mind is not rendered callous by dissipation, nor apathetic by despair, ’tis a painful reflection, that his dearest ties—his closest connexions—are dependent on him for subsistence, whilst fate sets his best efforts on a cast, where the chances are two to one against him.

The weather was intensely cold, and who would exchange the comforts of a fireside for a seat in a large—probably an empty room? My expenses were certain, and no popularity of name to rouse public curiosity:—then what could I expect?

The bustle of preparation in some measure roused me, and the kind encouragement of those gentlemen to whom my letters were addressed, completely routed the dismals. In short, I performed on one of the coldest nights I ever remember, to a highly respectable, though not crowded room; and an immediate remittance to the inhabitants of the cottage, eased my mind of its principal care.

My performance closing at nine o'clock, a young gentleman to whom I had been introduced, invited me to sup with him at the — inn. There was a billiard table in the house, and whilst supper was preparing, we adjourned to play a game. There was no marker; but a lusty, good looking man, who I understood was the landlord, officiated, seated in an arm chair. He seemed perfectly at his ease; now and then humming a tune, and occasionally giving his opinion, either upon the game, or any other subject, with a free and easy air, that seemed to say, "he did not care a d—n for any body." He had a most cheerful and prepossessing countenance, and his opinions, which were singular, were delivered with a boldness and freedom that astonished strangers, and at the same time attended with so hearty and good humoured a smile, that however one might differ in sentiment, it was impossible to be offended.

I was within two of the game, with a good hazard before me, when my opponent tauntingly observed, "he would win."

"That is a great affront," replied I, "considering my situation."

"*Pocket* the affront, sir," said my landlord; which I accordingly did, and thereby decided the game.

After this we played a while without any remarks from our bonny-faced host, who I found, from nasal tokens, had sunk into forgetfulness. He soon, however, awoke; and the first symptom he gave of recovered recollection, was singing "Oh! what a charming thing's a battle."

"This is a queer article," said I in a whisper to my companion.

"Aye," replied he in the same key, "and one that's not to be met with every day. I'll endeavour to draw him out. Friend Downright," continued he, "you sing about battles as if you delighted in them."

"To be sure I do," replied he. "War is a necessary evil, sir: it clears the country of the filth and scum of society;—saves the doctor, and the parson, and the sexton a world of trouble;—prevents plague, pestilence, and famine;—fills the pockets of great men, and stops the mouths of little ones;—in short, sir, it's like the balm of Gilead, a universal remedy for all disorders. So my toast is always 'Church and King, and down with the Rump,' and my song, 'Oh! what a charming thing's a battle.'"

"But, pray Downright, what have church and king to do with the charms of a battle?" enquired my companion.

"Why, sir, they are so nearly connected, that it is difficult to separate them. There has scarcely been a battle from David, down to Wellington, that church and king have not had to do with."

"And do you on that account justify war?"

"To be sure I do, sir. It is a new reading—the legitimate morality of the present day—to which I am a convert. We believe that a skilful financier, well versed in the arts of speculation, is a political saint;—that property comprehends virtue and talent;—that the man of small, or no possessions, is to be looked upon with contempt, whilst the

rich rogue is to be idolised ;—that he who professes to be a conscientious Christian is a Methodist ; and if he be the friend of peace and the pure constitution, a Jacobin ;—that the poor man must till the ground, and the rich take the produce ;—that the poor must fight our battles, and the rich receive the pay, the plunder, and the glory ;—that the poor must be punished for crimes the rich commit with impunity :—that 'tis right to boast of freedom in our own country, and oppose it in another ;—that the voice of prostitution is the voice of the people ;—and a great deal more, sir, all credited and practised by the wise disciples of modern morality, and as necessary to be believed as the Athanasian creed.”

“ Then you are no friend to constitutional freedom ? ”

“ I should like to be, sir ; but I can't live by it. A man who depends upon the public for a livelihood, must be, or seem to be, as great a fool as his customers, or he is turned out of the new school, and knocked down for a Jacobin. If it were not for that, sir, my song should be, ‘ Oh ! give me death or liberty—oh ! give me death or liberty.’ ”

The waiter now announced supper, and honest Boniface, accompanying us down stairs, wished us good appetites, and retired to his own apartment.

CHAP. XXXV.

“THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE.”

CUMBERLAND.

ONE of my letters introduced me to the reverend Mr. H—m, a dissenting minister; a gentleman whose benevolent and expansive mind, and singular goodness of heart, rendered him an object of universal esteem; and the cordiality of my reception evinced the high respect in which he held his correspondent. To him I was indebted for many good offices; but that for which I can never enough acknowledge my obligation, was the introduction he favoured me with to W— and J— S—tt, Esqs.

When great men are good men, it is an honour to be noticed by them; and I never met with a stronger case in point than the gentlemen above mentioned. There is often a freezing indifference to their inferiors in point of property, shewn by monied men—especially tradesmen; and though they condescend sometimes to give talent a dinner, it is done in a way that cancels all obligation. Obligation did I say? In my opinion, the favour is on the other side; for what could recompense a sensible man for being tied, with his legs under a table, for three or four hours, to hear the nonsense belched forth by these inflated sons of Plutus? I have met with a little of this during my experience in life, happening to have resided in Lancashire.

With these prepossessions, my surprise and enjoyment were the greater, when introduced to a description of people opposite in every point of view. Wealthy, perhaps, beyond most of their contemporaries in the trading world, the gentlemen I allude to seem to know it not; but with the pleasant freedom, which at once banishes chilling distance, and establishes a free and unshackled interchange of sentiment, they evince their good breeding and philanthropy;—the stranger in a moment feels as one of the family—and observes no difference, except in superior attention.

Such are the families of the S—ts, with whom I had the pleasure—nay the felicity, of passing many evenings, rendered more delightful by the company of elegant and accomplished females.

These were pleasant occurrences, and compensated in a great degree for the hard, precarious, useless, and unprofitable career, I found myself obliged to pursue.

During my sojourn at Derby, there was a dinner in commemoration of the Lancasterian establishment, to which I was honoured with an invitation.—The reader has not been often annoyed with that prostituted word in this work. Sometimes, however, as in the present case, it would be an error to omit it; for it is an honour, and a very great one, to be noticed by an assembly of well informed people, whose influence, profession, and moral character, render them valuable members of society. Such were the eight-and-forty gentlemen, who, I repeat, honoured me with an invitation to commemorate the establishment of this most valuable institution—and what rendered it, to me, still more acceptable, Mr. Moore, commonly called Anacreon Moore, presided. In fact, I promised myself a mental treat, nor was I disappointed, for this great little man was the life and soul of the company. Affable, energetic, gen-

demanly, convivial, charmingly vocal, and bewitchingly eloquent—never man filled the situation with such credit to himself, or delight to his associates. We were individually fascinated—and, at nine o'clock, the president, with ten or a dozen others, of whom I made one, adjourned, by invitation, to the house of Mr. Joseph S—tt, where we concluded the evening with a splendid supper, garnished with wit and innocent pleasantry.

The receipts of my second night were upon a par with the first, and, to add to my happiness, I received a letter from the cottage of comfort, confirming my most sanguine wishes for the health of its inmates.

“Thou hast no cause to grumble now,” methinks I hear the reader say. Indeed I have not, but most sincerely and gratefully rejoice, that, during my stay in this civilised and hospitable town, I had abundant cause to be satisfied.

The Theatre opened in a few days after my last performance, and, by the advice of my friend H—ll—m, a most sincere and worthy well wisher to my interests, and to whom I had a letter of introduction, I determined to take advantage of it. Accordingly, I engaged with Messrs. Manly and Robertson to perform a few nights, my emoluments to arise from a benefit. I experienced both kindness and liberality from the managers; for when they found my benefit not altogether so good as they and I anticipated—they, without solicitation, very handsomely made a reduction in the charges, which left me a respectable surplus.

These gentlemen sustain two distinct walks in the drama. Mr. Manly is an excellent tragedian, and Mr. Robertson treads the sock in some characters with unrivalled superiority—but how they contrive to prosper, whilst they admit *feeling* to sway their proceedings, I know not. It is the first

time I have heard, of late years, of its forming the slightest trait in the character of a theatrical manager.

And now comes on the painful task of taking leave. It may appear odd, but it is nevertheless true, that as I sit at this moment in my cottage, finishing this tedious memoir, with my old cat on my shoulder, and my wife by my side, I have worked up my feelings to such a pitch, that parting pains me more, perhaps, at this moment, than it did at the time.

Before I bid adieu to this excellent town and its inhabitants, I cannot pass over the politeness I met with, in repeated instances, from Mr. O—ks and family, Mr. Stephen G—e, Mr. J—p, Mr. T—c, Mr. H—k, and many others, whose names, at this moment, slip my memory, but whose kindness never will be erased from my heart.

After having said farewell to all my friends, I felt a strong inclination to bid adieu to Mr. Downright, the eccentric landlord. My friend H—m accompanied me, and we found him reading the newspaper aloud to a circle of hearers, his little scratch wig placed on awry, and making occasional whimsical observations on the matter he was delivering; as thus, “We hear, from undoubted authority, that our beloved Ferdinand of Spain has re-established the inquisition.” “I wish he was in h—ll embroidering a petticoat for a she d—l.” “The combined powers are retiring from the French dominions, in consequence of the scarcity of provisions.” “What! they have eat up all the frogs, have they? I wish there had been a few toads amongst ’em.” “Ministers, it is reported, are of opinion, that the taxing system can be carried no further.” “What! you have found it out, and be d—n’d to you.” “And that the Whigs and the

Tories mean to coalesce against the income tax." 'Aye! and *hang together* for the good of the country, sing tantara rara rogues all.' Then observing us, he took off his spectacles, adjusted his wig, and arose.

"Sir," said he to me, "I am sorry you are leaving us, and at the same time glad the town of Derby has not proved a losing concern. You made me laugh exceedingly the other evening, when you were exercising your wit at the expense of corporations. It's a fair subject, sir:—but satire has no effect;—they don't understand it:—it's like shooting against adamant—the bullet falls to the ground. For my part, corporate bodies appear to me perfectly useless. What are they good for? Why, to eat, drink, and gormandise; to take part against the people whenever their rights and liberties are in danger; and to become a common sewer for profligate great men to vomit their villany into; in short, they are every thing but what they ought to be—friends to the community and the constitution. Good bye, sir. Perhaps we may meet in better times, for nothing can well be worse. Tax-gatherers make us miserable all the week; and when we should have a little rest on a Sunday, up starts a man in a box, and tells us we shall be miserable to all eternity. So that between one and the other, there's nothing but war and taxation in this world, and h—ll and d—tion in the next."

We then left him to continue his comments, and I bade adieu to the worthy H——m with sincere regret; for he was one of those beings whose face was a faithful index of his heart; kindness and good nature being legibly written on every feature.

CHAP. XXXVI.

“THE SINNER TAKEN FOR A SAINT.”

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

IT was evening when the coach entered Nottingham; and as we drove down the extensive and beautiful Market place, brilliantly illuminated with lamps, I naturally, from this sample, drew a pleasing picture of the town, and said to myself, “If the inhabitants bear any comparison, what a pleasant time I shall pass!” Happy anticipation! For once I was a prophet.

The inn and accommodations kept pace with the appearance of the town. Every thing was complete, and I seated myself before a good fire for the evening.

“What’s the news of the day, sir?” said one traveller to another who was reading the paper, and taking coffee at the other end of the room.

“Why, sir,” replied the reader, taking off his spectacles, “there’s nothing but the old business. Long speeches in Parliament—the biters and the barkers. The ministers tell us that the country was never more flourishing, and the opposition say we are ruined. But here’s an article of interesting intelligence to those who have nothing to eat. ‘On Thursday there was a grand cabinet dinner,’ and on Friday the Prince Regent partook of a superb collation at Windsor, where the Duke of York——”

“Stop, sir, if you please. If there be nothing more interesting, I'll not trouble you. These newspaper writers think we are fools, or they would not insult the understanding with such stuff. By and bye, I suppose, we shall be officially informed, that the Queen has replenished her snuff box, and that the Prince has purchased a new pair of Russian whiskers.”

Some Pandean pipers in the yard now excited our attention, and being well played, soon emptied the traveller's room, with the exception of a round, huge man, who, I soon understood, came from the city of Chester ; and either from indolence, or want of taste, chose to remain. When we returned, he was puffing out fumes of tobacco, rather too voluminous for the comfort of those who sat in his vicinity ; and I soon found they meant to retaliate.

“Did you hear the pipers, sir ?” said one.

“No, sir. I admire no pipes but this I am smoking ; nor do I think persons of respectability ought to encourage such vagabonds. If I had them in my own city of Chester, I would commit them to the house of correction.”

“Then I presume you are in an official capacity,” said another gentleman, with an arch smile, “and probably your name is *Burroughs*.”

At the name of Burroughs, passion flashed from his eye—his pipe was dashed to pieces—and the enraged Chesterling swore he would not be insulted with impunity.

“I humbly conceive, sir,” said the first speaker, “that no one here means to offend you. Perhaps my friend's enquiry arose from respect for a person in your city of the name of Burroughs ; and why you should feel hurt at being taken for him, I cannot conceive.”

“Can't you ? But he can, d—n his b—d ; for he knows very well that Burroughs is the hangman !”

“Do not swear, sir,” replied the other, with a

serious countenance, "for if you are one of the quorum, which your appearance and ability indicate—it is unbecoming the gravity of your station."

The fat citizen finding passion unavailing, rang for another pipe, when the traveller continued, "I acknowledge sir, I know a good deal of Chester—I am acquainted with Burrough's occupation, and the chastisement you have received, you brought upon yourself, by introducing your pipe into the traveller's room without permission."

"Oh, very well, sir," replied the citizen, "then I'll take it in another room."

This was, however, overruled by the company, and the parties were reconciled. Chester continued still the topic of conversation. The inhabitant of that ancient pile launched into encomiums on his native place—and concluded, by giving the health of "Earl Grosvenor."

"You pitied his Lordship, no doubt, at the last election," cried his opponent, "Mr. Egerton's victory was an unexpected blow."

The citizen lighted his pipe.

"Pray, sir, do you know Mr. John W—lk—r, of your town?" enquired the persevering traveller.

"Yes," replied the other, in a sulky tone.

"Aye, you may thank him, and a few like him, for the recovery of your rights, by the election of Mr. (now sir John) Egerton. Chester has to boast of some spirited lads, who are not to be intimidated by the great Leviathan. Money cannot at all times, overcome the rising spirit of independence."

"The spirit of jacobinism, you mean, and disaffection to the noble house of Eaton, who have reigned over the city of Chester from time immemorial. But the impudence of these upstart friends of freedom, as they call themselves, is astonishing. Why, gentlemen, that very Mr. W—lk—r, who makes long speeches about rights and privileges, and sha-

king off yokes, and all that nonsense—had the assurance to tell the Earl to his face, that he should not force a representative upon them. ‘We’ll choose for ourselves,’ said he, ‘and convince your lordship, that the rising generation are not such contemptible fools as their forefathers have been.’ Did you ever hear such impudence, gentlemen? and addressed to a Peer of the realm too!” “I wish there were a few Mr. W—lk—rs in every town in the kingdom,” said one of the travellers. Then each, by a general impulse, as it were, filled his glass, and drank to the health of “Mr. John W—lk—r.”

This universal dissent from his opinion, was more than the citizen could bear. He laid down his pipe, raised his body slowly from the chair, walked up and down the room, and by way of being lively, hummed the tune of “Chevy Chase.” After a few turns, he again seated himself—when his original antagonist observed :—

“I hope sir, you are not angry at any thing that has passed, for I have a respect for the good old city, and should be sorry to offend one of its inhabitants. There was a time sir, when the mayor and corporation were so jacobinical, as you perhaps may call it, that they voted the freedom of their city, to the father of Billy Pitt, for laying the axe to the root of corruption.” “You are wrong, sir,” said the native of Chester, “such a thing never happened.” Upon which the traveller took from his pocket a pamphlet, and read as follows. • Saturday, Aug. 13th, 1757. The mayor and common council of the city of Chester, unanimously voted the freedom of their corporation to be presented to the honourable William Pitt, and the honourable Bilson Legge, Esquires, in gold boxes, for their strenuous efforts while in power, to lay the axe to the root of corruption—to retrieve the sinking honour of the nation—and to preserve its wealth by

propagating economy, in the application of the public treasure.' "This old magazine I picked up by accident, only yesterday, and am happy to produce it, as a proof, that the Chester corporation were not always the besotted tools of power, they have, of late years, shewn themselves."

There was no denying this, and the citizen observed, that as it happened before his time, he could not be answerable for it; but he was sure he never had to do with no such nonsense.

Though I was nearly silent, I much enjoyed the conversation; and from respect for the town in which I passed my juvenile life, I was glad to find the latter part of the contest end so much to its credit. The above extract I copied on the spot from the Gentleman's Magazine for 1757.

The following morning I waited on Mr. Richard Bonington, to whom I had a letter of introduction; and a neat, accomplished, prepossessing female, received me with much politeness and good humour, in the character of Mrs. Bonington. The whole of the dwelling impressed me with respect for its owners, from the cleanliness and comfort visible in all its arrangements. Mr. Bonington is an artist of celebrity, and his lively better self indulged me in his absence with a view of his works, at the same time conversing in a style superior to females in general. "As I find your name is Romney," said she, "may I venture to ask if you are the Itinerant? a work from which I have derived great amusement."

"I am, madam, and esteem myself complimented by the enquiry; for to stand well in the opinion of an accomplished female, must be the predominant wish of every man of sense."

Mr. Bonington soon made his appearance, and being informed who I was, with a cheerful countenance, and a hearty shake by the hand, exclaimed, "Mr. Romney, I rejoice to see you. You are

welcome to my cabin. You are the man I have much wished to come along side of; and now you've boarded me, you shall not set sail again till we have emptied the locker of a bottle at least."

"You are very polite, Mr. Bonington; but excuse me to-day."

"Excuse you! Shiver my timbers if I do, though." He then enquired what time dinner would be ready, and proposed a walk to the Castle in the mean time.

"You have been at sea, Mr. Bonington, I presume," said I, as we stood admiring the prospect.

"At sea, sir!" replied he: "you may say that, my hearty. I have seen some service. But I soon got moored in the harbour of matrimony, and instead of brushing the ocean, I now brush canvas to a pretty good account."

Nottingham Castle stands upon an eminence, commanding most extensive and enchanting views of the country for many miles round. It is a modern building, the gateway at the entrance being the only remnant of the ancient structure.

Highly pleased with my walk, and the warm-hearted welcome of the worthy artist, I returned to dinner, and spent the afternoon very pleasantly, aided by the conversation of a respectable dissenting minister, who resided in the family.

I, of course, explained my views in coming to Nottingham, and received the voluntary assurance of every service and assistance; which was most religiously verified, even beyond all expectation.

I had taken a room, the expense of the theatre being more than I thought myself warranted in risking; and the next night was fixed for my performance. Many of my letters I sent to the gentlemen they were addressed to; some few I delivered myself; and one in particular must not be omitted, because it involved me in a whimsical situation.

A friend at Derby favoured me with a letter, to his sister, which ran thus :—

“ To Mrs. Barnsley, Nottingham.

“ Dear Sister,

“ The bearer, my friend Romney, has been holding forth here to a good and profitable purpose, and hopes to do the same in Nottingham. He has been attended by all our friends, and I have no doubt you will reap a gratification in hearing his lectures. Whatever civilities you show him will be esteemed favours conferred on

“ Your friend and brother,

“ JOHN TOMKINS.”

Having knocked at the door of Mrs. Barnsley, I was introduced to a very serious, demure looking lady, in a primitive cap and costume, that gave me reason to suspect I had not much to hope from that quarter. When she had read the letter, however, I changed my opinion. A pleasing smile o’erspread her countenance, and holding out her hand, which I respectfully took, “ Brother Tomkins is very good,” said she, “ and I hope your labours here will be equally profitable. I shall not fail to inform our friends of your arrival, a few of whom dine with me. Will you partake? We eat at three o’clock.”

To this I assented, and when I rose to depart, she again took my hand, and sighed out, “ The Lord be with you.”

“ This is the oddest business,” thought I, “ I was ever yet involved in. She was certainly pleased with her brother’s letter, and promises to influence her friends in my behalf; yet her appearance

and mode of speaking savour much of the fanatic. Dinner, however, will solve the mystery."

At the appointed hour, arrayed, as usual, in black, I made my appearance, and was introduced to the rest of the family. They were simple people, and anxious after the health and welfare of Brother Tomkins. "He was a heavenly man," they said, "and did more good in the circuit than any of his predecessors."

Now, my friend Tomkins being a lawyer, gave me an idea that they were praising him for his integrity in a profession that sometimes leads men to act not quite so conscientiously as perhaps they ought; and as doubtless he frequently took Nottingham in his circuit, they must be well acquainted with his principles. I had scarcely come to this conclusion, when in came two lank haired gentlemen in black, whose pale complexions indicated abstinence and mortification. Indeed we were a trio of pale looking disciples, with this difference—I wore powder, and they did not. I bowed. They made an attempt; but it was visible from their awkwardness, that the graces formed no part of their study.

"Pray," said the elder of the two, addressing me, "was it you that gave that excellent discourse Brother Tomkins speaks so highly of?"

"Mr. Tomkins' friendship," replied I, "leads him to paint my humble efforts in too bright colours."

The dinner was that moment announced, and as we descended to the eating parlour, my brain was puzzled to know how this strange business would end. As we stood round the table, the lady, in a soft tone, requested me to ask a blessing. Here was a situation!—However, I hesitated not, but in the most concise, though reverential manner, said, "God bless us!"

Mrs. Barnsley looked amazed ! 'The company in general eyed each other—and one of the lank haired gentlemen began a rhapsody of instruction to the Deity, "do thou this," and "do thou that," that filled me with disgust. He was not contented with asking a blessing for the company, but lost so much time in calling down blessings on a fine cod's head and shoulders, and a smoking surloin of beef, that they were nearly cold before we were suffered to fall to. When we did begin, to see how the *spirit* gave way to the *flesh*, was astonishing. The fish was quickly devoured, and the surloin soon cut a very insignificant figure, under the fangs of these evangelical advocates for fasting and abstinence. At this dinner, and it is not the first time I have made the remark, the *saints* most marvelously *over ate* the *sinners*.

The dinner over, all rose again ; and again I was asked to return thanks, which I immediately did, by saying, "Thank God !" But this would not do, and another long string of resolutions were produced, and seconded by plenty of *amens* !

When the cloth was drawn, as I had shewn some signs of not being altogether *the thing* ; one of them, by way of gauge I suppose, with a demure, convenient countenance, which "habit had rendered a property of ease," said, "Pray, brother, are you of the old or new connexion?" Luckily for me, I was extricated out of this difficulty by the entrance of the servant, with a paper in his hand, on which, as he passed to his mistress, I observed the word *Brooms*.

This was the touchstone. "Now," thinks I, "the mystery will be solved." Soon as Mrs. Barnsley cast her eyes upon it, she exclaimed, "How dare you take in this paper?"

"It is not a play bill, ma'am," said the boy.

"Don't tell me," replied the lady. "It's the

same thing. Some signal to assemble sinners in the house of Satan." With that she rose and committed it to the flames.

"Now," said I to myself, "the murder's out. There must have been some mistake; for my friend Tomkins would not, I am sure, willingly involve me in this unpleasant situation."

I then rose, and observed, "Madam, the bill which has called forth such severe animadversions is mine."

"*Your's !*" said the lady, with a look nearly bordering upon horror.

"*Your's !*" repeated the lank haired pair.

"Yes, madam—gentlemen—*mine*. There has been a mistake, which I am unable to account for. You acknowledge the letter I brought from your brother at Derby."

"You brought a letter, as I conceived, from Mr. Tomkins the preacher; and though not my brother in the flesh, he is so in spirit."

"My friend Mr. Tomkins, madam, is an attorney, and favoured me with a letter to his sister, Mrs. Barnsley."

"Who lives next door," said the lady.

Thus the mistake was cleared up; and making a handsome apology for my innocent intrusion, I was about to depart, when she begged me to stay a little longer, and not leave the house with a bad impression of her hospitality.

"That is impossible, madam," said I. "You have entertained me liberally; and though it was done under false impressions, I must ever think favourably of it."

I had frequently been taken for a clergyman of the establishment; but this was the first time I ever passed for a Methodist preacher; although my spare habit, pale complexion, and general costume, joined to the letter, might have imposed upon

a more discerning party than the one I had just left.

Although an improper hour to wait upon a lady, I could not resist calling at the next door, and found the real sister of my friend as pleasant and sprightly as her namesake was the reverse. She laughed heartily at my description of the foregoing scene, enjoyed the perplexity in which I had been involved, and finally assured me of every service in her power.

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CHAP. XXXVII.

“BETTER LATE THAN NEVER.”

WILLIAM DAVIS.

MY first lecture was numerously and respectably attended, and I began to think fortune tired of persecuting me. How a little success buries the remembrance of past sufferings ! It is a wise ordination of Providence, for, were it otherwise, existence would be insupportable.

My friend, the artist, from whose nautical phrases, athletic appearance, and fondness for his original profession, I designated the Admiral ; took so warm a part in my concerns, and exerted himself so much for my interest, which he had great power to promote, from the number of respectable boarding-schools he attended, that I entertained an idea of taking the Theatre for my next performance.

“That’s right, my hearty,” said he. “Never fear ; we’ll weather the storm. Take the helm of the great ship for a cruise—spread your top-sails—hang out your signals—clear the decks—I’ll find a few hearty shipmates, to man the yards ; and if we don’t bring you into port, well laden, say I’m no sailor—that’s all.”

Through the introduction of this kind-hearted man, I was daily engaged in parties ; and in one of these he promised me a treat. “Now,” said he,

“my boy, I’ll take you to the cabin of a sixty-four, where you’ll find every thing ship-shape, and some brave lads, that will help to man your fore-castle and quarter-deck. I’ll introduce you to a doctor, who will give you a solo on the harp, and a philosopher, who can dive into Davy’s locker, and bring up shipmates from the bottom of the Red Sea.”

From this I was led to expect a scientific performer on the pedal harp, and a skilful mechanist, who probably had made some improvements in the diving-bell. I had not long been introduced, before one of the company drew a *Jew’s* harp from his pocket; and though he certainly played uncommonly well, it made no amends for my disappointment. “But where’s the philosopher?” said I, in an under tone.

“Don’t be impatient, my hearty,” replied the Admiral; “he’s like a rusty sword, not to be drawn out of his scabbard without some difficulty.”

He then began, very seriously, to speak upon the properties of matter, in which he was joined by others;—and advanced, that spirit and matter, though two distinct things, were equally, at times, discernible to the human eye.

“Impossible, it cannot be,” said several. When a gentleman who sat by the fire, and had hitherto remained silent, turned round, and looking at the company with a smile between contempt and pity, exclaimed, “Impossible, is it? I suppose you all believe the scriptures?”

“Oh yes—aye—aye,” was the general reply.

“Then you perhaps recollect that there are such things as Cherubims and Seraphims?”

“Yes, I remember,” replied the Admiral: “little, round faced lubbers, with wings, who are continually crying.”

This had too much the appearance of ridicule to please this serious looking personage, and he was

silent until the Admiral by some observation induced him to proceed.

“Well, gentlemen,” said he, “if you are seriously inclined, I must inform you, that besides the *Cherubims* and *Seraphims*, there is another spirit called a *Teraphim*; and the business of this *Teraphim*, is to convey to certain mortals a power of beholding unembodied spirits.”

“Wonderful!” said the Admiral.

“Yes, and one of them is at my elbow even now.”

“Astonishing!” ejaculated the Admiral.

“Not at all, sir. If it were not for the powers of the *Teraphim*, how could I have beheld so many of my departed friends? Why, in this very room, you can see nothing except ourselves; but I can.”

“Indeed, sir! You alarm me,” said one.

“We must be cautious what we say,” said another; “for perhaps we are in very exalted company.”

“More *exalted* than you are aware of, perhaps,” replied the old gentleman. “Since I have no doubt some of them were *hanged*; for they are all d—ls.”

“D—ls!” said the Admiral, pretending alarm, “Where are they, sir?”

“Why, dancing in the middle of the room, to the tune of the *Black Joke*, and the *Pope* is playing the fiddle for them.”

“It’s very odd we don’t hear the music,” said one.

“Not at all. Spiritual music is never heard by temporal ears, unless the *Teraphim* communicate the sound. It’s that Doctor’s infernal harp that brought them up. What the *Pope* is doing here I cannot tell, unless he is teaching the d—ls a new dance this holyday time, by way of recompense for past services.”

From the general laugh that ensued, I was led to think the gentleman had been exercising a vein

of satire for the amusement of his friends ; but I was soon convinced of the contrary, by the offence their mirth inspired. No one could again launch him—he turned to the fire, and became a tacit observer.

The hilarity and conversation continued ; but my mind was not satisfied with this short sample of the ghost seer ; and shifting my chair by degrees, I at length drew close to him.

“ This company, sir,” said I, in as solemn an accent as I could assume, “ are too full of levity for serious people.” As it happened, I had touched the key note.

“ You are right, sir,” he replied. “ They are sceptics. Some have the gift of prophecy—some can cast out devils—but few can see them.”

“ It’s a wonderful faculty, sir,” said I.

“ Since you do not look like one of the scoffers, I’ll tell you a little anecdote, sir. In a country place—a sort of village—through which I often passed on pleasure or business—or what not ; there lived one of those idiots—a poor girl—who used to run about in a ragged state, craving charity. I dare say you have seen such, sir.”

“ Very often. And a scandal it is to the country that better care is not taken of those poor unfortunates.”

“ True, sir ; but that is no business of mine ; ‘ sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.’ Now, sir, your idiot has a superior power of vision to what human nature in general is capable of ; and you’ll always find, that spirits are more easily discerned by idiots than the greatest divines, or most learned philosophers ; for this reason, they have more faith. Now Mrs. —, that is, my wife sir, accompanied me one day through this village, and we stopped at the public house to take a little refreshment. It was nearly dark ; and whilst I fed the horse, Mrs. —, my wife sir, having occa-

sion to go through an empty room, to—a—no matter what—caught her foot upon something which upset her, and a heavy weight at the same time fell upon her. This, by struggling to extricate herself, she found was something cold and lifeless, and in the greatest alarm called for assistance. We all hurried to the spot, and there, sure enough, was Mrs. —, my wife sir, and the corpse of this poor idiot, sprawling upon the floor; for she had died the day before, and was laid out in this lumber room. It is impossible to describe the situation of my wife sir: she fell into fits, and it was a full hour ere she came to herself. At length, however, I drove from the village, and had proceeded about a mile, when we came to a part of the road where this poor unfortunate idiot usually took her stand to beg for charity. At this place, sir, the horse began to snort and rear, and would not proceed; for these animals have an instinctive knowledge that we know nothing of. As I did not wish to alarm Mrs. —, my wife sir, I got out of the gig, under a pretence to—a—no matter what—and invoked my Teraphim; when, in an instant, my vision was opened, and I beheld the poor idiot, in her usual dress, curtseying, and holding out her hand for half-pence. Here was a situation, sir: in a dark lane, and a weak woman with me, who, if she had seen what I saw, would have swooned away."

"Dreadful, sir!" said I. "Did you give her any thing?"

"What! give money to a spirit! You might as well give corn to a cod fish. No, sir. My Teraphim chid her—the spirit departed—and I mounted the gig, determined to get home as quickly as possible. But I don't know how it was—whether the mare still saw the girl, I'll not pretend to say, but I could not get her into the middle of the road; and after proceeding about an hundred yards, in

spite of every effort, she overturned us into a horse pond. Fortunately it was not deep ; so I released my wife, righted the gig, led the mare till she became tractable, and then returned home all mire and dirt. Mrs. —, my wife sir, kept her bed for a fortnight, and it was twelve months before I durst tell her the real cause ; and then, sir, do you know, she would not believe me."

"It is astonishing," said I, "how hard of belief some people are. If you had related this story to the present company, they would have been equally incredulous."

"To be sure they would sir, and that is the reason I withhold from them many surprising things. —We are not to cast our pearls before swine, you know, sir."

The company, when they observed me in close conversation with this uncommon character, did not interrupt it, naturally supposing his singularities would be a treat. And so indeed they were. As we returned home, I asked the Admiral, if he thought the old gentleman was in earnest.

"To be sure he is," replied Bonington, "he as firmly believes that he can see spirits, as that you see me."

"If this man had lived two hundred years ago, he would have been taken for a witch," said I.

"'Tis now the witching time of night, when church yards yawn," replied he. So we shook hands, and parted.

My performance being advertised, in both the papers, for the following Monday, my friend, the Admiral, worked for me day and night, with more zeal, than probably he would have exerted for himself. All the families to whom I had letters, took boxes, and were, in other respects, kindly hospitable and frequent in their invitations. In particular, Mr. N——m, a gentleman of the first respectability, who resides a small distance from

town, and his amiable family, shewed me every degree of politeness, and true English hospitality. At the house of Mr. F——s, who repeatedly favored me with his notice, and where excellent wine was rendered still more palatable by rational conversation; I had the honour, amongst others, of dining with the chief magistrate of this ancient borough.

From my general opinion, acquired by long experience, of the “*nous*” information and liberality, to be expected from members of the body corporate, I was led to expect as usual, that his worship’s talents would be confined to his knife and fork, and the extent of his knowledge, to the excellence of the dinner and the merits of the cook. But, I must say, I was never more agreeably surprised—for, instead of an inflated, overgrown citizen, a huge feeder, and a man, whose most refined sensations arose from the gratification of his appetites—I beheld a slim, pleasing, gentlemanly person, whose countenance betrayed mind and information, courteous and mild in his manners, and so temperate, that I began to doubt his claim to the rank and title by which he was announced. “This can neither be the mayor nor alderman,” thought I, “if he be, the race, in this country, is much improved.” In fact, however, — Morley, Esq. was, at this period, mayor of Nottingham, and the most gentlemanly sample, of the kind, I ever knew.

Riches will, at all times, give their owner consequence, and obtain a considerable portion of respect. It is difficult to divest one’s-self of increased reverence, for a man worth an hundred thousand pounds, however insignificant and frivolous he may appear, prior to the intelligence—but, when riches, talent, and virtue combine, the object becomes truly estimable; and, I am happy to say, I have, during my pilgrimage, met with many such.

All the time my friend, the Admiral, could spare

from teaching and portrait painting, in which he was fully and most respectably employed, was devoted to my service. The evening but one, previous to my performance, "Come, my hearty," said he, "now I'll introduce you to the snug little cabin of a tight cruiser, down the channel here in the narrow seas, Captain Perry, commander."

He then took me down a narrow lane, and into the parlor of a tavern. The room was so small, that fifteen people could scarcely sit comfortably, yet double the number found room.

"What cheer my hearties," cried the Admiral, "can you give a birth to an old shipmate, who has stood some heavy gales in his time?"

For me to sit seemed impracticable—yet, such was the disposition to accommodate, that we both found seats, and *Captain Perry*, as my friend called him, a little smiling good-natured man, set before us some famous Nottingham ale. The Admiral, in his usual way introduced me to the company, and a set of more hearty, generous, joyous fellows, I never met with. People in the middle walk of life, respectable tradesmen, possessing a neighbourly harmony and good fellowship towards each other, pleasing to behold. To their good offices I was greatly indebted, on the night of my performance, and I hope this work may fall into their hands, when they will find I have not been forgetful of their kindness.

The long expected evening at length arrived, and the Admiral piped all hands. "Every man to his post," said he, "Captain Perry, Parke, and I, three stout lads, will watch the gangway, and if any lubber passes, without paying his reckoning, shiver my timbers, that's all." Accordingly, the Admiral and his friends kept watch, as he called it, at the door, that the whole of the receipts might come into my possession. To make short of the matter, I was more numerously and respectably attended,

than my most sanguine hopes could have foreseen, and the receipts amounted to *sixty pounds!!!*

“ Did not I tell you my hearty, when you were lowering your jib the other day,” said my friend, “ that we would bring you safe into port ? I thought we might fire a *decent* gun, by way of rejoicing, but d—n me, if I expected a *sixty pounder*.”

The joy of my friends, on this occasion, was equal to my own, and I felt myself every way gratified.—The extensive patronage I had experienced was highly flattering and peculiarly acceptable, since it enabled me to supply the wants of my family—and, I sunk on my pillow, with a heart deeply impressed with feeling towards the good people of Nottingham, and gratitude to God.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

“THE FAREWEL.”

MIDDLETON.



“In the world I fill up a place, which may
Be better supplied, when I have made it empty.”

AS YOU LIKE IT.

“What should such fellows as I do,
Crawling between Earth and Heaven?”

HAMLET.



WHEN I take a retrospect of the foregoing sheets, the produce of nearly three years' labour, I consider myself throughout that period, as in company, and upon terms of friendly intercourse with the reader. And, as I draw towards the conclusion, a sensation arises in my breast, something like what we experience, when parting with an old friend, whom it is about ten to one we shall never meet again.

The quantum of spirit necessary to render a work of this kind interesting, I have endeavoured, hitherto, to sustain, in opposition to much dejection of mind and surrounding embarrassment, but now find

it difficult to continue, and am strongly impelled—as my worthy friend, the Admiral, says, to “hang my jib.” “Rouse, rouse ye, man,” methinks my wife would say, “after supporting your character so long and so respectably, you must, at least, take a graceful leave of the audience.”

Such advice is good, and I will follow it, if I can.

Bidding adieu to my kind and hospitable friends at Nottingham, I proceeded to Loughborough, eight miles distant. To this place I had letters, and entered the town with good expectations. But alas! I was woefully deceived. For, except the politeness I experienced from Mr. O——, a gentleman with whom I was previously acquainted, I do not remember passing a more unpleasant week. The town itself is a wretched hole, and the inhabitants,—but my letter to the Admiral will best describe this inauspicious period:

To Mr. Bonnington, Portrait Painter, Nottingham.

Lethargic, Loughborough, Friday.

I have found out one thing; Admiral, Loughborough is not Nottingham. A dreadful, dirty, abominable place, scarcely a rational creature to be met with. I wish I was away from it without loss. Here, I am at the Inn, without a soul to speak to from morning to night—Monday, however, will come, and then I’m off.

I called on your friend B——n. He is a man of talent and information—a rara avis—a swan amongst the ravens. Friend B——, gave me a letter to a Mr. H——. I enquired who he was. “Oh, sir,” said the hair dresser, “he’s an independent gentleman, and writes for the Review.” “Lucky

enough," thought I, "a liberal, intelligent, and independent man is just the thing."

Anticipating an hospitable reception, I posted to the house of this independent gentleman; and determined in my own mind to avoid wine, was fully prepared to reject his invitation to dinner, which I concluded, would follow of course. But I literally reckoned without my host.

The door was half opened, in a suspicious kind of way, and the purple countenance of the Reviewer was visible in the vacancy. I produced my letter; but no invitation to dinner, not even to come within his independent threshold; thinks I to myself, surely he'll not let me remain in the street. But it was even so, Admiral. This ruby-nosed Reviewer permitted me to stand in the mud whilst he read the note.

I'll tell you what, friend Bonington. This man may write for the *Review*, and he may be an *independent gentleman*; but if his politics are as confined as his politeness, the cause of freedom will gain little by his lucubrations. Unused to such treatment, and of course disgusted, I left him, without waiting his answer, to the full enjoyment of his gentlemanly independence.

It is now Tuesday morning. I wrote the above, in expectation of sending it by a private hand, but was too late; therefore detained it for the purpose of communicating my further progress in this melancholy place. A gentleman of the name of O—r resides here, with whom I contracted an intimacy at Parkgate. He is not a *Reviewer*, neither is he *independent*, although one of the first manufacturers in the place, and perhaps that accounts for his *gentlemanly* conduct, and the kind interest he took in my concerns. In short, he was the only person in this enlightened town, your friend B—n excepted, who behaved to me with politeness and hospitality.

Last night I exhibited. Half the audience at least, were children; indulged, I suppose, by their

parents with a couple of shillings to see *the Show*. You cannot conceive how this degrading idea annoyed me. You know I am irritable, and easily cast down ; and this silly circumstance, trifling as it may appear, damped all my energies. A thousand times I wished myself a chimney sweeper—a thief taker—nay, even a deputy constable :—for nothing could be more degrading, than to figure away as a make-sport to old women and children. Shocking indeed, must have been my sombre attempts at humour ; however, I got it over as soon as I could, and this morning I shall depart towards home.

I know you will blame me for not endeavouring to accommodate my disposition to existing circumstances : since I must be well assured, that it is impossible, in your own phrase, to find every thing *ship shape* in this *sea* of troubles. But what can one do ? We do not make our own dispositions. It is sport for one man to witness the distress, and hear the pitiful cries of a poor, harmless, hard-run hare, whilst another man's heart aches at the sight. The hero, or human butcher, volunteers his services—he feels a bloody impulse—longs to be cutting down his fellow creatures—and rejoices in the well fought field, where thousands are left writhing in the agonies of death ;—whilst the same scene would deprive a feeling man of his senses. So that there is no measuring other people's dispositions by our own.

Farewel, my excellent friend. May your pencil long continue to point out the path to prosperity : whilst I return to my cottage, and cheer its fireside with a true and grateful relation of the numberless favours you, and the inhabitants of your enlightened town, have conferred on

Dear Admiral,

Your sincere friend, and obliged servant,

S. W. ROMNEY.

The school-boy, after being kept close to his studies for several months, at a distance from kind and indulgent parents, packs up his clothes at the vacation in eager haste, anticipating with youthful ardour the pleasure he shall enjoy in again embracing those who are nearest and dearest to him.

Nothing can describe my sensations so clearly as this. After three months absence, the thoughts of return increased the pulsation of my heart, and I locked up my portmanteau with school-boy-like feelings, intermixed with anxiety, lest ill health or some casualty might yet retard so desirable an event.

Every stage drew me nearer ; and after a tedious day's journey, I arrived late in the evening at Chester. The sight of the old town was always cheering to me ; and became doubly so now, because it undeniably proved, that the cottage of comfort was near at hand. At ten o'clock the following morning I left the coach, at the village of Neston, a mile from Parkgate ; and as I walked down the hill, my little white dwelling came into view—need I say, the sight was grateful ?

Solemn temples—gorgeous palaces—may glitter in the eye of sovereignty ; the topmast of the rich and towering bark give signal of approaching treasure to the merchant ; but all these—nay, even Albion's cliffs of snowy hue to a returning mariner, are not more delightful, than the white walls of the village cot to the returning Itinerant.

They may be ill—they may be dead—all is possible. Here's a neighbouring farmer—I'll question him.

“ Well, John, how do you do ? ”

“ Pretty middling, sir ; thank you. ”

“ And how are—I say, how are—how are your wife and family, John ? ”

“ Pretty middling too, sir. Good day. ”

Thus imagination, ever busy in conjecture, fills the mind with fancies, as fallacious as a dream.

I pretend not to be more sensitive than many others ; and I leave it to those who are capable of feeling as acutely as myself, to paint mine.

As I approached, my favourite Chanticleer, surrounded with his happy feathered family, as if to announce my arrival, pierced the air with his shrill notes ; whilst seated at her cottage door, intent upon a book, sat my friend of *forty years*—the stimulant to all my labours, the ample reward of all my toils. She saw me not. Standing at the wicket, my mind whispered, “ Oh, Fortune !—if thou wouldst but even gently smile upon our latter days ! ”—her eye caught mine—the book fell on the grass—and—conceive the rest, ye who can—smile, ye who may.

“ He jests at scars, that never felt a wound ! ”

And now, reader, we must part, perchance, forever. Like two passengers, who having travelled together a long journey, not displeased with each other's company, shake hands, and separate with mutual reluctance, and good wishes. Farewel, then. You to your mansion, ease, and affluence perhaps ; I to my cot and comfort, perhaps—perhaps ! an awkward word—would it were more certain ! No matter. Fate decrees, and I submit.

“ Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.”

SHAKESPEARE.

THE END.

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